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THE INDEPENDENT

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The Tabloid
Five pages on cinema

Education+
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Shirtsleeved Major rallies the Tories to his cause

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

John Major yesterday whipped his party together on Europe, with a bravura question-and-answer conference session that brought out all the hard-hitting qualities of his 1992 election campaign.

But, while the Prime Minister's performance thrilled his Bournemouth audience, the real test of the Tories' rare unity will come when Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer and bogeyman of the Euro-sceptic Right, faces the conference today to reiterate the government case for keeping an open mind on a single currency.

Senior ministers believe that, if the party can unite, it is in with a fighting chance of winning a fifth term of office in the next election: if the Euro-sceptics continue sniping from behind, the party will go down to defeat.

There was no sign of abatement in the attack from what one minister described as the "loony-tune" fringe yesterday.

But Mr Major told the conference that there was one thing that would distinguish the Tory case for the development of a Europe of nation states and Labour's determination to use it for the introduction of back-door socialism.

"It would be if this party stopped conducting an internal debate with itself and began conducting a debate with the electorate and the Labour Party," he said to loud applause.

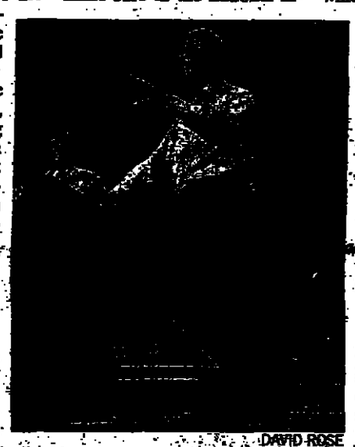
"My job," he added later, "is to take our ideas to Europe not just hijack their ideas and bring them back here."

Hitting all the buttons of an essentially loyalist audience, a shirt-sleeved Mr Major said the great prize of Europe would be the drawing aside of "an economic iron curtain", allowing the countries of eastern and central Europe into the European Union.

But he then directly took on the dissidents, saying that while it might win him "easy applause", there would be immense risks from unilaterally and immediately ruling out British participation in a single currency – effectively withdrawing from negotiations on the terms of its creation.

"This is an issue, which if it were to go wrong, could crack wide open the European Union as we have seen it build up over the last 25 years," he said.

"And if it cracked it open, then it would impact on this country as well, so we need to make sure in the national interest that we have Britain's voice in this debate."



DAVID ROSE

'Opposition politicians should get the video of yesterday's triumph, and shiver a little'
Leading article, page 19

Mr Major said that if the single currency failed, "then the fall-out... would make the fall-out of the collapse of the Exchange Rate Mechanism look like a teddy bears' picnic, economically, right across Europe".

Bolstering his position still further, he reassured the conference, to strong applause: "If a future Conservative Cabinet decided that it was right to enter into a single currency, if it decided that, then there would be a referendum of the full nation specifically on that particular question."

While some pro-European ministers believe that argument could be won over a two-month referendum campaign, many believe that a Conservative government will not be able to enter a single currency in the next Parliament – even if Mr Major does win.

Meanwhile, however, Mr Clarke is actively engaged in preliminary negotiations on the formation of a single currency, which made marked progress during a Dublin meeting of economic and finance ministers earlier this month.

And it is Mr Clarke who will provide the litmus test of unity when he addresses the conference – following the announcement of the latest inflation figures this morning.

The test is so critical that it was even considered whether he should mention the single currency. However, it was decided that the issue had to be faced.

Nor will the politically pugnacious Mr Clarke duck the question of tax cuts. One Treasury source said yesterday that tax cuts would have to be paid for by spending cuts, which no Cabinet colleague has been quick to volunteer.

One minister even said last night that the promised expansion of workfare remained an experiment, because the Treasury was not yet satisfied that a national scheme would provide actual savings.

In yesterday's trail-blazing question-and-answer session – a conference first for any prime minister – Mr Major told representatives: "If the Conservatives are out on the streets, knocking on the door saying we are the Conservatives, this is what we stand for, we win.

"And if they're wringing their hands saying we're behind in the opinion polls, we're very unpopular, then they don't win."

Donald Macintyre, page 21

Ancient spires dream of a new Ivy League

Photomontage: JONATHAN ANSTEE/BRIAN HARRIS

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

Universities should be remodelled on the American system with Oxbridge, Durham and London forming an élite Ivy League, the Secretary of State for Education believes.

The statement from Gillian Shephard, in an interview with *The Independent* is bound to anger some vice chancellors, who want a chance to work their way up the league table.

In the first hint of government thinking on universities since the launch of a major inquiry into their future, Mrs Shephard said she was "obsessed" by the need for high standards and well-funded research.

"I am interested in the model that the States presents. Of course, we have a great tradition of our own with very ancient institutions, and it seems to me that together we can produce a solution which can work for us," she said.

The inquiry, headed by Sir Ron Dearing, is not due to report until next year. His appointment was supported by all the political parties, and was designed to put off the issue of university funding and expansion until after the general election. However, Mrs Shephard seemed to pre-empt his findings when she suggested that the future of most universities might be left to market forces.

The Americans had "an enormous and fairly uncharted expansion but a very clear élite cadre," she said. She argued that Britain had to choose between that and the type of higher education which is common in Europe, where students are guaranteed a place if they make the grade.

In effect, the changes contemplated would mean splitting the university system into two or more parts of varying status. Those at the top would receive most of the research funds and might possibly choose to charge higher fees.

European universities tend to be large and to have similar levels of status while American ones vary in size and standards. In America, Ivy League universities – such as Yale and Harvard – can attract more research funding and enjoy prestige status.

With one in three 18-year-olds now going to university, compared with one in five a decade ago, Sir Ron has been asked to look at how the system should be funded in the future.

US universities give students bills for their tuition, but such a solution is unlikely to be politically acceptable here. However, ministers do want to encourage universities to seek more sponsorship.

Mrs Shephard's view seems to suggest that she wants to see most research funding going to the top few universities. This trend is already angering vice chancellors who want excellent departments in otherwise run-of-the-mill universities to receive extra cash. She said it was vital that the best universities had good research facilities.

"Very well-funded research and well-targeted research money encourages excellence in higher education and enables universities to build up excellent departments which improve their overall performance," she said.

A spokesman for the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals said the Americans' elite structure would be welcome but their fees would not. "We should preserve excellence wherever it is to be found, but we should not under any circumstances have an élite set of universities to which only the wealthy can go," he said.

David Watson, director of the University of Brighton and a member of Sir Ron's inquiry team, said there were many positive things about the British university system which should remain. Americanisation could cause it to be fragmented, he said.

"In the United States there is not only the Ivy League and the community colleges but there's also a huge gradation in between.

"You could have an Endsleigh League and a Beazer Homes League as well. Here we have a better sense of community," he said.

Why can't Freshers spell?
Diana Warwick profile
How to teach maths
A to Z of universities
All in our new Education+ section inside

QUICKLY

British Nobel winner
The British chemist, Sir Harold Kroto won the highest prize in his profession, the £1m Nobel Award, just hours after being turned down for government funding in the same subject that won him the prize. Page 3

Tale of other halves
Elizabeth Dole is being pushed to the forefront of her husband's campaign for the White House, while the First Lady, Hillary Clinton, has been kept out of the media spotlight in the run-up to next month's presidential election. Page 14

Rover sees £3bn boom
BMW plans to increase production at its Rover subsidiary by a half, to 750,000 cars a year, as part of an ambitious £3bn investment programme that will see the model range completely overhauled, slimmed down and moved significantly up market. Page 24

Independent Decade
From Big Bang to City scandal. Sarah Hogg, Hamish McRae, Christopher Huhne and Jeremy Warner – *The Independent*'s four business editors – on 10 extraordinary years in economic management, the City and business. Pages 22-23

Scottish goalkeeper untroubled in easiest World Cup victory

Phil Shaw
Tallinn, Estonia
and Steve Boggan

Brian Clough once said that "It only takes a second to score a goal" and yesterday the Scottish national side proved him right by winning 3-0 in as many seconds without breaking sweat.

The result against Estonia – a rare Scottish away win – was achieved not by skill, guile or heart, not by giving 110 per cent and certainly not by outplaying the opposition. Because there wasn't any.

The win, only the second of its kind in a World Cup qualifier, was achieved because the Estonians failed to turn up. At three seconds past three Estonian time, with the song "One team in Tallinn, there's only one team in Tallinn ..." ringing in their ears, the Scottish side walked off the pitch with three points in the bag.

At the same time, 60 miles away, the Estonian national side was embroiled in a dispute with Fifa, the world football governing body, over kick-off times and television rights.

The farce began on Tuesday, when Scotland lodged an official complaint about the standard of floodlighting at the Kadriorg national stadium. Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, felt it was not good enough to cope with the planned 6.45pm local time kick-off (4.45pm BST).

Overnight, Fifa agreed and the kick-off was brought forward, first to 5pm and then to 3pm after more protests by the Scots. By 1.30pm, however, the Estonians had not turned up. Officials who did told the referee, Miroslav Radoman, that the team was still at the training camp, eating a pre-match meal.

Knowing the Estonians did not plan to make the 3pm kick-off, the Scots put on their kit and took to the pitch in a pre-match warm-up in front of their 700 travelling fans. At the allotted time, Billy Dodds of Aberdeen touched the ball to John Collins of Monaco and three seconds later Mr Radoman blew his whistle, abandoning the game. Pending confirmation from the Fifa authorities in Zurich, Scotland are likely to be credited with the standard 3-0 win awarded when the opposition fails to turn up.

There was speculation last night that the Estonian no-show may have had something to do with £50,000 in lost television rights. BBC Scotland was understood to have offered the fee for coverage of the match at its 6.45pm slot.

However, when it was brought forward, it coincided with the BBC's coverage of a memorial service for the victims of the Dunblane massacre, meaning the football coverage was abandoned.

Mr Brown said that the fiasco had "left a bad taste in the mouth". He added: "We have not been told yet by the Fifa delegates if we get the points. We will comply with whatever Fifa say next.

"We are giving the players their jerseys and the International Committee will decide if they are to get their caps."

The Estonian manager, Teitur Thordarson, an Icelander, said there was "something dirty" about the whole affair. "I feel terrible. It was too late for us to change the time when we were told. We were looking forward to playing Scotland; we were ready for the match and the players were fit."

The match that wasn't, Page 32

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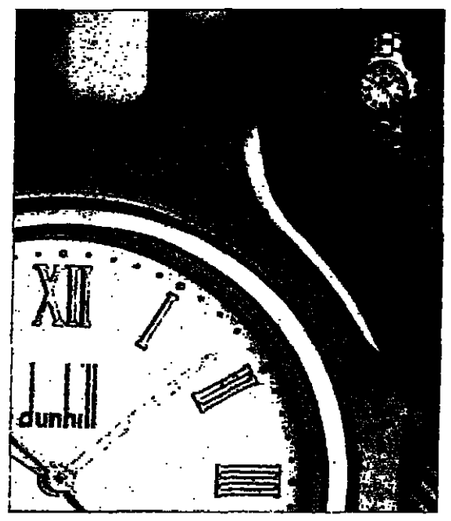

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Blast aftermath: Massive investigation after Ulster attack exposes serious breach of security

Bomb plans laid months ago

DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

The RUC yesterday revealed that the IRA had been involved in planning this week's bomb attacks on the British army's headquarters in Northern Ireland as long ago as June.

Two people were yesterday described as critically ill following the two car bomb explosions within the army base at Lisburn, Co Antrim on Monday. The RUC yesterday described the attacks as an attempt at mass murder.

The RUC detective heading the investigation into the bombings, Chief Detective-Superintendent Derek Martindale, said three vehicles were involved in the attacks. The indications are that the bombs were contained in two Volvo estate cars, and that the bombers made their escape in a Volkswagen Passat.

Wanted: a photofit of the suspect Lisburn bomber

Det-Supt Martindale said the bombs had been placed in two car parks about 100 yards apart. The first exploded in the motor transport car park, while the second went off 15 minutes later outside a medical centre.

He added that some of those wounded in the first explosion had been further injured by the second: "I have no doubt this was a deliberate attempt at mass murder. They wanted to create the maximum ... threat to life. It is particularly sickening that they decided to delay the second explosion by 15 minutes, to further injure those injured in the first explosion."

The bombers seem to have gained entry to the headquarters by using a "passholders only" lane at the main gate. This has raised the issue of whether they used false identification passes. Almost 200 police are involved in the investigation of what is regarded as one of the most serious security breaches ever seen in Northern Ireland. Police are sifting through a large amount of video evidence from security cameras, while the army is conducting a review of security at the base.

Det-Supt Martindale said one of the Volvo vehicles had been bought in the Lisburn district on 4 th June, while two other vehicles had been bought on 3rd July and 23rd September. Police yesterday issued a photofit likeness of a man who purchased one of the cars. In all, the three vehicles cost the IRA almost £12,000.

Meanwhile, political activity yesterday centred on denunciations of the IRA violence coupled with appeals to loyalist paramilitary groups not to break their ceasefire. The *Taoiseach*, John Bruton, accused the IRA of a cynical betrayal of the peace process, comparing the IRA to the Nazis.

President Clinton's national security advisor, Anthony Lake, also appealed to the loyalists to show restraint.

The Northern Ireland Secretary, Sir Patrick Mayhew, said he would not close the door forever on Sinn Fein's possible entry into talks, but said that day had been put back. He said in a BBC interview: "If you behave like this, everybody perceives a threat that there will be more to come unless you deliver the kind of settlement the IRA and Sinn Fein want.

"I'm not going to say 'never and for ever', because I don't believe it's sensible to close doors for always. But, of course, they put it back, and make it a harder job to convince the rest of us that they will be sitting there truly on democratic and peaceful terms."

■ The IRA said last night that Diarmuid O'Neill, shot dead by police in west London last month during raids that netted a ten-ton haul of explosives, was one of their members.

Fear on the streets: A woman passes a soldier back on patrol on the Falls Road in Belfast yesterday Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Great mood that drained away

JOJO MOYES

In the centre of Franklin Hunter's workshop, Renaissance ironworks, in east Belfast, is a high backed iron chair that he refuses to sell – it is the chair used by President Clinton during his visit nearly a year ago.

Mr Hunter, 59, talks eagerly of the visit, as do most of the businesses on the two-year-old Connswater Industrial Estate. Halfway through the ceasefire, the visit was a potent symbol of renewed optimism and the rejuvenation that had begun to take place in even the poorest areas of Northern Ireland.

"There was a buoyancy, a great mood," Mr Hunter says of the American President's visit. "Everyone was here to see."

Yesterday afternoon in east Belfast, however, the mood was rather different. As the full significance of the IRA's admission of the Lisburn bombings sank in, it was not one of shock but of resignation. After the tensions of the past few months, most people feel the IRA's actions had an air of inevitably. What concerned them was how to stop it escalating.

Mr Hunter, who describes himself as apolitical, said the problem lay with the intransigence of politicians. If it was left to the "ordinary man" peace might progress. "We've got to get through with all these monosyllabic politicians – all you hear is them saying 'no, no, no'. We should kick them out. It's politics that's keeping the people apart."

Connswater Estate is something of a symbol of change. Situated in Protestant east Belfast, one side is overlooked by the grim facade of the former UDA headquarters. On the other is the Connswater Shopping Centre, a thriving, modern mall.

Business has been good for the small firms here since the ceasefire and yesterday most appeared determined to keep it like that. At Irvine Office Equipment, a woman who declined to be named, said she and her colleagues wanted to "just keep on with ordinary life".

Whether the Loyalists would escalate the situation would depend on "how far the IRA were going to push it", she said. "That's why they've got to keep talking."

This was reiterated by a spokesman for the local enterprise agency. "It was euphoric here last year," he said. "You hope they will just keep talking."

Provided the politicians take heed, for Mr Hunter, there is hope for the peace process. "I think people will eventually come to realise that there's merit on both sides. I still view it with optimism."

Lisburn attack severest test for Loyalist politics

DAVID McKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

One of the most surprising and most welcome features of the peace process was the emergence of the fringe loyalist parties – the new breed of articulate working-class loyalists advocating dialogue in preference to violence.

New parties, the Progressive Unionists and the Ulster Democratic party, and new faces such as David Ervine, Billy Hutchinson, Gary McMichael and Davy Adams, put a modern, and astonishingly moderate, gloss on loyalist paramilitarism.

The image of the gunman in the balaclava was suddenly superseded by these articulate men, many of whom had thought deeply about politics while in prison.

In common with the IRA, illegal loyalist groups such as the Ulster Volunteer Force and Ulster Defence Association did not disband. But when the IRA cessation ended in February the loyalists maintained their ceasefire and continued to give politics a chance. In elections in May they were rewarded with 43,000 votes, almost 6 per cent of voters supporting them.

The IRA attacks in Lisburn are providing the severest test yet of the depth of the loyalist commitment to politics. From almost all sides come appeals to them not to open fire again; but from some sections of their grassroots there is pressure for a return to war.

The arguments are finely balanced. Those who want to maintain the ceasefire can point to their votes as evidence of support, and argue that much of it would disappear if their ceasefire ended. They can also argue

David Ervine: Moderate gloss on paramilitarism

that the loyalist parties still have a place at the table in the Stormont political talks. Ending their ceasefire would mean their automatic expulsion into the political wilderness.

They can also point to the new relationships established with important political elements in Belfast, Dublin, London and Washington.

The moderates can also contend that re-opening a sustained campaign of killings will guarantee that Northern Ireland is plunged into large-scale violence. Loyalist aggression would obscure the responsibility of the IRA for re-starting violence, and deflect at least some of the criticism from republicans.

But arguments will be heard for a resumption. The political approach of Mr Ervine, Mr Hutchinson and others was based on the assumption that republicans were ready to negotiate rather than fight, a contention which Lisburn has undermined.

If the conclusion is that negotiation is off the agenda, and that the IRA is intent on a return to war, then the ending of the loyalist ceasefire is inevitable. But if there is a possibility that the IRA wants to fight a limited campaign and envisages another peace process at some future stage, then the loyalist leaders may pause.

Discreet communication channels are known to exist between the extremes of republicanism and loyalism, and it may be that messages are even now passing back and forward.

But one argument for resumption to violence is based on tradition: that loyalist paramilitarism has been necessary to protect the union with Britain. Viewed from this perspective, the ceasefire has simply been a holiday from the perpetual struggle against republicans.

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significant shorts

Prince grieves with Dunblane families

The Prince of Wales attended a memorial service in Dunblane yesterday for the 16 children and one teacher who were killed in the school massacre by gunman Thomas Hamilton in March this year.

Michael Forsyth, Secretary of State for Scotland and local MP, and Labour's George Robertson, who has lived in the city for 20 years, also attended the service, entitled "Out of Darkness Into Light", which was organised by families and friends of the dead and injured. In a moving tribute, relatives came forward to light a candle for each life lost on 13 March.

The sermon was delivered by the Very Rev Professor James Whyte, who was chosen by the families and who took the memorial service after the Lockerbie disaster. "Darkness cannot be allowed the last word," he said, adding that the candle was a good symbol for children because it was small yet bright and warm. But, he said: "The candle is also a symbol of fragility, vulnerability. It is easily snuffed out."

London camps for refugees

The prospect of refugee camps in London's parks and open spaces was raised yesterday by Andrew Slaughter, leader of Labour-controlled Hammersmith & Fulham Council, in a letter to Stephen Dorrell, the Secretary of State for Health.

The council is one of the three authorities ordered by the High Court on Tuesday to provide the basics of life to destitute asylum seekers who do not qualify for income support. Tory-controlled Westminster and Labour Lambeth are also subject to the ruling. Mr Slaughter said the Tent City site at Wormwood Scrubs, west London, was being readied in anticipation of hundreds of claimants in coming weeks. The council says there is no money in its budgets and no room in council accommodation to meet the needs of the expected rising numbers.
Patricia Wynn Davies

Smoking link to blindness

American scientists at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, in Boston, have established a link between smoking and loss of vision due to an age-related condition. A 12-year study of almost 32,000 female nurses found that those who were current and past smokers had a significantly greater risk of the condition, known as Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), than non-smokers. AMD is the main cause of blindness in people aged over 65. *Liz Hunt*

Veteran Tory MP dies

Sir Nigel Fisher, a Tory MP from 1950 until 1983, died yesterday aged 83, his son, Mark Fisher, who is a Labour front-bencher, confirmed.

Sir Nigel, who represented Surbiton for most of his Westminster career, served as Under-Secretary for Commonwealth Relations and the Colonies in the 1960s.

Obituary, page 14

Taxman loses as wine pours over Channel

The amount of wine and spirits pouring in to Britain via cross-Channel shopping has risen dramatically over the past year, confirming a growing trend that the avoidance of paying UK excise on alcohol is becoming a way of life.

According to figures released by the Wine and Spirits Association yesterday, more than a quarter of all wine drunk in this country is bought in Calais, with one in eight bottles of spirits consumed being purchased by cross-border shoppers.

The figures represent a loss of £145.36 in excise and VAT for the Treasury for every car coming from Calais with a total shortfall, excluding beer and the Channel Tunnel, of £573.1m – about 10 per cent of the Exchequer's income from excise duty on drink.
Charlie Bain

Jersey wins sunshine war

Jersey has beaten Eastbourne in the sunshine wars and been reinstated as the sunniest resort in the British Isles.

Earlier this year, the Sussex town appeared to have put Jersey in the shade when it successfully persuaded the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to stop the island from running television commercials claiming that it gets more sunshine than anywhere in Britain. The Jersey authorities appealed and the ITC has ruled that the Channel island does average more sunshine than anywhere else, and may say so. *Philip Jenne*

Woman on bail over dead baby

Millionaire's daughter Emma Gifford was remanded on bail until 13 November when she appeared in court yesterday on a charge of killing her new-born baby. She had earlier been charged with concealing the birth of a baby whose body was allegedly found in the freezer at her London flat in April this year. Ms Gifford, 21, of Ashford, Kent, is the daughter of Michael Gifford, who retired last year as chief executive of the Rank leisure group.

Painting by Hitler for sale

An untitled watercolour thought to be by Adolf Hitler goes on sale next week after remaining undiscovered in a British ex-serviceman's home for half-a-century. The painting, which shows a series of tiny black figures scurrying across a square in Vienna, is thought to date from before the First World War. It will be auctioned next Wednesday by Dickinson, Davy & Markham, of Brigg, Lincolnshire.

Harmony at last for Geldofs

Bob Geldof and Paula Yates's custody battle over their three children was resolved yesterday, after a four-day private hearing, when they agreed to share the care of the youngsters. A joint statement, read by a solicitor, said: "They have now resolved matters in a way which they both believe to be in the best interests of the children."

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Wallace faces possibility of new death trial

STEVE BOGGAN

A former army information officer who claimed he was framed over the manslaughter of his friend had his conviction quashed yesterday, 10 years after being released from a six-year prison term.

But within minutes, Colin Wallace, 53, whose name has become synonymous with allegations of MI5 intrigue and Ministry of Defence subterfuge, heard that the Crown Prosecution Service is to seek a re-trial on the same charge.

Mr Wallace, of Arundel, West Sussex, was sentenced to 10 years for the manslaughter of Jonathan Lewis, an antiques dealer. He was found drowned in the river Arun, West Sussex, in 1980. Mr Wallace was due to meet Lewis on the night he died to discuss a friendship he had developed with Lewis's wife, but he has always denied killing him.

During his trial in 1981, the jury was told that Lewis had suffered a skull fracture while being knocked unconscious by a karate blow before being drowned. The karate chop assertion, made by a Home Office pathologist, Dr Iain West, was later followed by newspaper pictures of Mr Wallace, a former paratrooper, in SAS uniform, incorrectly giving the impression that he had been trained in unarmed combat.

Yesterday evidence from two other pathologists contradicted Dr West's theory. Lord Bingham, the Lord Chief Justice, sitting at the Court of Appeal, ruled the conviction unsafe and said that if the members of the trial jury were allowed to accept the karate chop theory for the skull fracture they were "plainly misled".

After the hearing, Mr Wallace, who served as an army information officer in Northern Ireland until his dismissal in 1975 for handing over a classified document to a journalist, said he believed Lewis had been murdered by rivals in the antiques trade. "The police have evidence of this but have suppressed it," he said. "For the last 16 years, successive Home Office ministers have told MPs there is no reason to doubt the original findings and now key parts of the evidence have been abandoned and other parts discredited by experts."

He said he would vigorously oppose the prosecution's application for a re-trial and would seek compensation for the years he spent in prison.

The karate chop theory was contradicted by Professor Bernard Knight, also a Home Office pathologist. He told the court at a hearing in July that such a powerful blow would have damaged Mr Lewis's nasal bones, as well as causing bleeding, swelling and bruising. But there was no evidence of this.

It had been the Crown's case that Lewis had been knocked out by Mr Wallace and dumped in the river two hours later.

Colin Wallace: Dispute over karate chop theory

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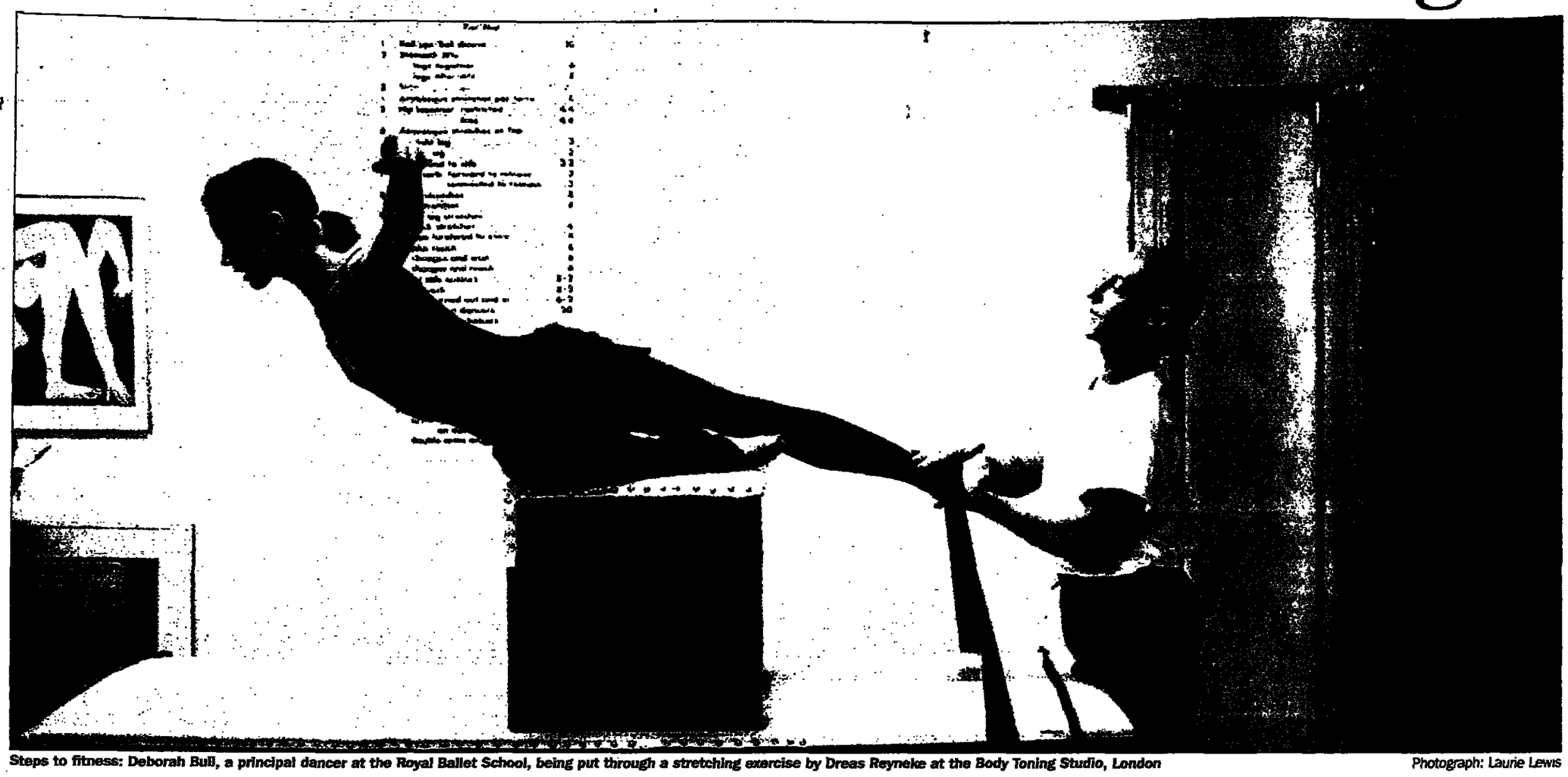
The ballerinas who dance with danger



Steps to fitness: Deborah Bull, a principal dancer at the Royal Ballet School, being put through a stretching exercise by Dreas Reyneke at the Body Toning Studio, London

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

CLARE GARNER

Royal Ballet star tells how she and others put health at risk through ignorance

Deborah Bull, one of the principal dancers at the Royal Ballet School, has confessed to an *unhealthy lifestyle of intermittently* starving herself, making excessive demands on her body and ignoring warning signs of early injury.

Ms Bull, 33, admitted that until three years ago she was ignorant of "simple but vital facts" about health and fitness. Only when she met her boyfriend, Torje Eike, 40, the physiotherapist responsible for keeping the Rolling Stones on the road, did she realise the damage she was doing.

"You may find it surprising that it is possible to reach such an elevated status without being an artist who is an athlete and an athlete who is an artist," said Ms Bull.

Speaking at this week's launch of *Fit to Dance?*, Ms Bull, 33, endorsed the conclusions of the book's five-year national inquiry into dancers' health and injury. The book describes how ballet dancers routinely abuse their bodies and hammers home the message that prevention is better than cure.

The inquiry, funded by the Gulbenkian Foundation, involved 658 professional dancers and dance students. It showed that British dancers are between 5 per cent and 7 per cent less aerobically fit than their US and Russian counterparts. Some female classical dancers are only marginally fitter than untrained people in the street.

Ms Bull said Mr Eike had been shocked by her fitness levels. "Initially I was not as fit as Mick Jagger," she said, "but now at last, I might give him a run for his money."

Much of today's choreography is aerobic, but the report reveals, dancers are unprepared for these new demands. "There are people who say – 'we don't want to get into athletics, we don't want you to look like middle-distance runners', but the feats we're being asked to do are athletic," said Ms Bull. "We can't ask people to survive on art alone. It won't carry you through a demanding performance."

The research also showed that dancers' diets are not well-balanced. Ms Bull was, until recently, as guilty as the next dancer of entertaining for having "a rather special relationship with food". "Personally, I never had the will power to become anorexic, but if I had done I might have been, because I was so desperate to achieve the shape whatever the cost," she said.

Now that she has undergone her nutritional "metamorphosis", Ms Bull is anxious to spread the word. But students at the Royal Ballet School are taken aback by her message. "Many of them thought, or had been told, to eat a lot of protein and avoid those 'nasty, fattening potatoes'," she explained.

Kenneth Tharp, 36, who danced for the London Contemporary Dance Theatre, added: "Often people take more care of their cars than their bodies. We're under daily pressure and unlike the annual MOT, we have to make the grade night after night. It's heartbreaking to think of the number of dancers who are determined to achieve their roles whatever the cost and set off on a course of self-destruction."

Robert Cohan, the founder artistic director of London Contemporary Dance Theatre, admits that dance companies are at fault, too. "With the best will in the world, when you're working for an opening performance and someone is injured you just don't want to know," he said. "I always used to feel coming back from tour with the London Contemporary Theatre was like Napoleon's return from Moscow. It was like coming back from a war campaign. How many injured? Could we get on stage?"

The inquiry revealed that 34 per cent of the contemporary dancers and 83 per cent of the ballet dancers and students had incurred an injury – predominantly muscular – in the previous 12 months. Of the injured professional dancers, 58 per cent had taken days off work because of injury, compared to 83 per cent of the injured students. Half of the professional ballet dancers and 75 per cent of the contemporary dancers had paid for their own treatment, consulting mostly physiotherapists or osteopaths.

The Director Laureate of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, Sir Peter Wright, made a plea for Lottery funds. "To me it's the right of all dancers to have proper medical care and the best possible working conditions regardless of the wealth of the organisations they are employed by...I just hope that those who hold the national purse strings will read it *Fit to Dance?* too."

Chemist gains a Nobel but loses his funding

CHARLES ARTHUR
Science Editor

A British chemist yesterday learnt that he had won the highest prize in his profession, the Nobel Award, just hours after being turned down for government funding in the same subject that won him the prize.

Sir Harold Kroto, 57, of the University of Sussex, was awarded the £1m prize jointly with two American scientists for their discovery in 1985 of the structure of "buckminsterfullerene", a form of carbon composed of 60 atoms, which looks like a molecular soccer ball.

But hours before the news, he was told the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC) had turned down his department's request for £100,000 over the next three years to study the chemistry of the molecules, which could have important industrial applications. Sir Harold was delighted with the prize but downcast at funding cuts which led to the EPSRC rejection.

Sir Harold Kroto: 'Science is below survival threshold'

"My feeling is that fundamental science in this country is now below its survival threshold. It used to be 14 per cent of government funds, and now it's more like 5 per cent or so. The Government wants people like me to work with industry, and is trying to do it by coercion."

He originally tried to do the work which led to the discovery of the buckminsterfullerenes in Britain. "I approached three major companies here and they said it was interesting, but it was the sort of work the Government should be funding."

Instead, he went to Canada and then to the US to perform the required work, with Robert Curl and Richard Smalley at the University of Houston. The molecules are formed when gaseous carbon condenses in an inert atmosphere. Mass spectrometry, which shows the relative weight and composition of an unknown molecule, offered the chemical formula of the new products, but nothing about their structures.

The researchers then spent a night at Houston University trying to build a model of a 60-atom molecule composed only of carbon. Each carbon atom must attach to exactly four others, each equidistant.

An early attempt used jelly-babies as the atoms and cocktail sticks as the bonds between them. Eventually, a junior chemistry modelling set, with plastic "atoms" and "bonds" was found, whereupon they discovered that carbon-60 looks exactly like a soccer ball, with an interlocking combination of hexagons and pentagons.

The applications of buckminsterfullerenes, and other carbon forms with 80 or more molecules, could be wide-ranging. Japanese companies are trying to use them in night vision goggles, and they could even have uses in AIDS therapies.

Sir Harold said he intends to use his prize money to pay debts in a science film company that he helps to run.

■ The Nobel Prize for Physics went to three American scientists who discovered the "superfluid" property of helium at temperatures close to absolute zero. Douglas Osheroff, David Lee and Robert Richardson shared the award, which was described as "a breakthrough in low-temperature physics" by the citation committee. It could help to explain the "superstring" theories of the universe.

Disgraceful verse tops poll

DAVID LISTER
Arts News Editor

A lyrical homage to growing old disgracefully by the Gloucestershire poet Jenny Joseph is currently topping a poll to find the nation's favourite poem of the past half century.

The survey, conducted by BBC Television, closes at noon today. Last night Jenny Joseph's "Warning" was closely followed by Stevie Smith's "Not waving but drowning", with Dylan Thomas's "Do not go gentle into that good night" third.

Joseph, 64, is a winner of the Forward Poetry Prize and "Warning" has been in a number of collections which have proved very popular. Never the less it is a surprise that a relatively little known poet should be holding pume position.

Her first book of poems was published in 1960 and immediately won an award, as did her second collection and subsequent books. *The Times Literary Supplement* has described her best poems as revealing "a world living in the clutches of disappointment and mortality, but open to the possibility of intense delight in minute but dazzling particulars of nature and in rare acts of human kindness".

Ironically, despite the BBC's attempt to attract the young and widen the definition of poetry – including rock lyrics – the top three are all poems about growing old. The only pop lyric in the top 20 is John Lennon's "Imagine".

"Warning" begins:

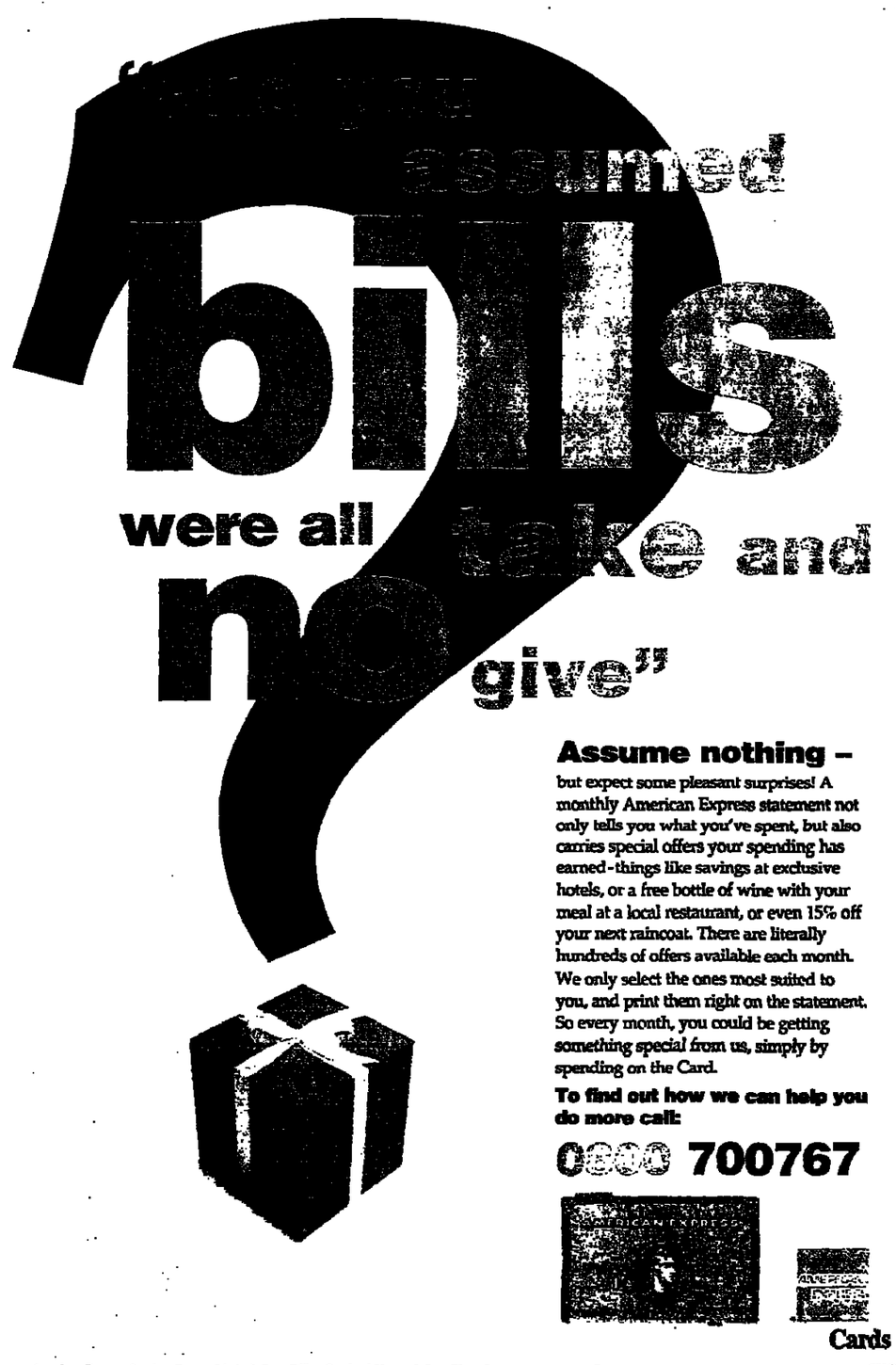
When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.

Last year Rudyard Kipling's "If" won the BBC poll for the nation's favourite poem ever. This year the poll, aimed to coincide with National Poetry Day today, was limited to poems written in the last 50 years. Daisy Goodwin, producer of *The Nation's Favourite Poem*, which will be broadcast tomorrow night, said: "It's striking that the leading contenders are all poems about middle age, growing old and dying.

"There are not many love poems in the top 10. When people turn to poetry they turn to it for comfort. Love and sex and the fun things are dealt with by pop music; but the really awkward things, when you're looking for solace, remain the province of poetry."

Other poets, such as Larkin and Betjeman, have polled more votes than Joseph, but the votes have been split between different works. Other poets in the top 20 include Auden, Heaney, Ginsberg, Maya Angelou and Caroline Duffy. Sylvia Plath is at number 20 with "Daddy". Ted Hughes, who was married to her, is at 32 with "The thought fox".

Daily Poem, page 11



news

Murdoch furious after Sun paid six figures for hoax tape

Tape allegedly showing Diana and lover among great hoaxes of Fleet Street

PETER VICTOR and MARIANNE MACDONALD

The future of *Sun* editor Stuart Higgins was in question last night after the humiliation of the Higgygate videotape debacle. Rupert Murdoch, the newspaper's proprietor of the *Sun* is said to be enraged.

Mr Higgins will not be helped by reports that he paid a six-figure sum for the tape. Yesterday, it emerged that the tape had been hawked around the US and rejected by at least one other publication in London a week before the *Sun* splashed it as a "world exclusive".

Jane Ennis, editor of the celebrity news magazine *Here!*, said yesterday that she was approached last Tuesday by a man who claimed to have a scoop.

It didn't take Ms Ennis, 48, long to reject the film after watching it at the magazine's offices in Victoria, central London. "Firstly, he didn't look like anybody you might trust," she said. "He came into my room and we watched the film. I asked him some questions about it – who made it, when it was filmed, how he came by it – and he couldn't answer them."

Ironically, in the course of questioning the man, Ms Ennis believes she might have planted the seed of the story that was later used to dupe Mr Higgins. "I told him that it was a bit of an old story anyway unless there was some new angle to it, like if it had been filmed by MI5 or something. He didn't say anything but his eyes lit up. I said we'd think about it overnight"

Ms Ennis said she was concerned that the black and white video could easily have been doctored. "I discussed it with my colleagues and we checked with one of the paparazzi guys in the US. He said 'yeah we've heard about this but no one is touching it'. I called them and said we weren't interested.

"By the time they got to Stuart [Higgins] they must have tightened up their story considerably. Perhaps they treated me as a trial run but I've no doubt they presented him with a much slicker operation. I feel very sorry for Stuart."

This may be some comfort to Mr Higgins. But probably not much. A *Sun* insider said yesterday that Mr Murdoch was on the warpath. "No one is talking about how much money it cost and they are saying that Higgy might go."

The *Daily Mirror*, meanwhile, has done its best to maximise Higgins' discomfort by exposing the hoax and forcing the Sun to issue an humiliating apology.

Mr Higgins refused to comment, but he wrote in the *Sun* that he had done his best to corroborate the film with independent witnesses and had hired surveillance experts to suggest its original source. He and his deputy, Neil Wallis, had viewed it again and again to make sure it was the real thing.

In fact "the real thing" was nothing more than an 80-second showreel by an aspiring filmmaker, a 32-year-old writer called Nick Hedges, who explained that he made the film with the intention of sending it to producers to demonstate the kind of sketch he could do.

There would have ample opportunity, he believes, during the editing and video production processes for it to be copied, and he is claiming that it was "maliciously stolen and used for financial gain".

Yesterday the *Sun* was throwing its energies into finding the "smart American lawyer" who sold the paper the 80-second video for more than £100,000 "on behalf of a group of soldiers or bodyguards led by a man known only as the Sergeant".

Mr Higgins can console himself that he is not alone in being hoaxed. The *Sunday Times* was spectacularly duped in 1983 by the forged Hitler diaries, while the scientific world was taken in by the 1912 Piltdown skull. More recently, the famous photograph of the Loch Ness Monster rising from the deep was found to be a fake. Christian Spurling confessed on his deathbed he had helped a friend make it from a toy submarine.

While only a year ago the Queen was hoodwinked into broadcasting to Canada by a DJ called Pierre Brassard, posing as the Canadian premier, Jean Chretien. She kept her job. It remains to be seen if Mr Higgins will do the same.

Leading article, page 19

Great hoaxes of our time: The Hitler Diaries, Piltdown Man, the Loch Ness Monster, and the Canadian DJ who tricked the Queen into talking on air Photomontage: Jonathan Anstee

Scientists urge BSE tests on monkeys

KATHERINE BUTLER
Brussels
and CHARLES ARTHUR

The Government's stance on BSE came under renewed scientific fire yesterday, as a world expert on the disease said it should now be assumed to have been transmitted to man, and a leading science journal accused agriculture officials of trying to hide vital information.

Charles Weissmann, of Zurich University, who heads a team of independent scientists appointed by the European Commission, said the available evidence of a link between BSE and the new variant of the brain disorder Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD) was "sufficiently suggestive" that we should act as though it were proven.

He called for new experiments on monkeys to help determine the extent of the risk of BSE to human health.

So far 15 cases of the new variant of CJD have been reported in Britain, all in the past three years. BSE was first reported in the UK herd in 1986. Professor John Collinge, a leading UK expert, said the chances against the two being connected are "astronomical".

Meanwhile, the journal *Nature* today reports one scientist as saying that the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food was "scared" about releasing information on the extent of BSE to independent scientists at the University of Oxford, because it would reveal how many diseased cows which were not showing symptoms had been consumed by the British public.

The Oxford work, published in August, suggested that up to 700,000 diseased cows were used in food. The Government latched on to the prediction that BSE would die out by 2001 to stop the slaughter, agreed with the EU, of 140,000 cattle.

However, Professor Weissman cast doubt on the claims about the eradication of BSE, suggesting that it could be endemic, albeit at low levels.

He also said that 10 years of research had left key questions about the disease unanswered. He advised new research to establish how BSE is passed from cows to their calves, whether BSE originated spontaneously in cattle and not as is believed crossed from sheep, and on whether pigs and chickens can develop the disease. from infected feed.

The Zurich-based professor said there was no evidence "so far" to cite milk as a risk factor but added that the available tests may not be conclusive.

Professor Weissmann said the Oxford claim was premised on the assumption that contaminated feed was the only source of the BSE in cattle. He suggested that there may be transmission mechanisms scientists are not yet aware of.

'UK will profit by global warming'

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

Global warming is expected to make Britain wealthier in the next century, economics professors said yesterday.

Economic gains caused by man-made climate change will outweigh the losses in developed, mid-latitude countries like the United Kingdom, the Yale University economists said. Much of the improvements will come from the beneficial effects on plants.

The biggest winners of all will be the three nations which have the worst track record on producing "greenhouse gases" – Russia, Canada and the US.

The claims, made at a seminar organised by oil companies including BP and Shell, were dismissed by a leading environmental organisation as complacent and suspect.

But they show how the global warming debate has been transformed within the past two years.

No longer do major producers and consumers of fossil fuels such as the oil giants, who have most to lose from policies to tackle the threat, dispute that global warming will happen in the next century. Now they are questioning whether anything much needs to be done about it.

Professor Robert Mendelsohn unveiled the results of wide-ranging studies into the impact of warming on the US. By 2060, he forecast, GDP would be about $40bn (£2.7bn) a year higher than it would if there had been no climate change. Similar results were expected for northern Europe.

Merylyn McKenzie Hedger of the World Wide Fund for Nature said the studies "reveal great complacency. There are these underlying planetary life support systems, such as habitats, which they ignore."

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Fashion's bumpy night of lumps and humps

TAMSIN BLANCHARD
Paris

"The dress meets the body. The body meets the dress. And they are one," said the Comme Des Garçons spokesperson before the show in Paris on Tuesday night. We knew then to expect *something* challenging. The lights went down and with only the whirring of the camera motor drives for music, the first model walked out with a sheer black stretch top, a hump over her bottom and knitted pads shoved down the back of her top to make her look like a cross between Elephant Man, Quasimodo and the eccentric night-clubber, performance artist and Lucien Freud model, the late Leigh Bowery.

Rei Kawakubo, the label's designer, chooses to ignore the trends that dog most fashion designers. Instead, Kawakubo tries to push the boundaries of fashion forward and challenge the way people think. She does not stop at dresses and jackets. On Tuesday night, she redesigned the human body.

As the hand-selected members of press and buyers invited to the show stifled their giggles, model after model walked down the silent runway with their humps and lumps, strange tumours and growths. Brightly-coloured dresses wrapped around the body, gathered strange padding underneath. One looked like she was pregnant with a boa constrictor which had just eaten a fully-grown sheep. Another skinny waif had the bottom of a fat woman bobbing along behind her. Kawakubo may be an artist and a sculptor, but it is difficult to understand who *would* buy *this* collection to wear.

Yesterday, at Chloé, just one of the many labels designed by the prolific Karl Lagerfeld, the theme was Eighties disco dolly. Photographers booed at the end of the show after being bombarded by an endless stream of models pacing furiously around the catwalk. There were satin disco hip-huggers in pastel colours, signature frilly dresses, delicate lingerie and, for Kate Moss, a miniature Elvis suit in white with rhinestones. Lagerfeld is expected not to renew his contract with Chloé next season, leaving another key position at a Paris fashion house up for grabs.

Padding on the catwalk: Models wearing Rei Kwakubo's designs at the Comme Des Garçons show Photographs: Ben Elwes

Life for rapist who questioned his victim

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

The multiple rapist who sparked an outcry by subjecting his victim to an oppressive cross-examination in person was yesterday given two life sentences at the Old Bailey.

Ralstan Edwards, who questioned Julia Mason for six days in court, was a danger to women and had shown no sign of remorse, Judge Ann Goddard said.

The sentences came the day after Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, told the Conservative Party conference: "No woman should ever be put through an ordeal like that."

Edwards, 42, who has previous convictions for rape and assaults on women, was convicted of twice raping Ms Mason, who waived her right to anonymity and is campaigning for the law to be changed. During the inquisition, he made her relive in detail the 16 hours in which he raped and *humiliated* her. He wore the same clothes in court as when he attacked her.

"It was like being raped all over again," she said afterwards. "At least when a barrister is asking the questions, he is doing it to get to the truth. When a rapist is asking the questions, he knows what he has done and is furthering the act.

"To male politicians, I would ask them to change the law with regard to rape swiftly. May this never happen again."

Ms Mason's boyfriend, Bill Powers, and a Victim Support representative, Maureen Tubby, said after the verdict: "From day one, Julia wanted the law changed. Hopefully that will now happen speedily."

The case did indeed draw a rapid political response. After the conviction in August, a Home Office spokesman said: "The Government is concerned to ensure that victims of these hideous crimes are adequately protected and we will be giving further consideration to the issues raised by this case."

The 1988 Criminal Justice Act introduced a ban on a defendant questioning a child witness in person in cases of sexual offences and cruelty. The Home Office is now reviewing options for extending the same principle to protect rape victims.

It emerged after his trial that Edwards, of Catford, south-east London, had a previous conviction for raping a woman after getting into her flat. She was forced to have intercourse with him, fearing her 16-month-old child would be harmed.

He had also served jail sentences for violent assaults on women, including his wife who he once beat over eight hours with sticks and flex. Medical reports showed no suggestion of mental illness.

Julia Mason: 'It was like being raped all over again'

Cases involving unrepresented defendants put judges under additional pressure when trying to balance the duty to ensure a fair trial with the need to ensure witnesses are not subjected to oppressive questioning. Judge Goddard gave Edwards a warning during the trial not to question his victim again and again about the same incident.

The judge told Edwards yesterday that he had "blighted" Ms Mason's life. "You have not shown the slightest sign of remorse, but I make it clear I do not add one day to your sentence because you contested the charges or defended yourself.

"I have had an opportunity of seeing and hearing you over a number of days. You see things only from your point of view. If you want to inflict harm on a woman you will, and you do not consider your victims at all."

Aaronovitch seeks great ovation with the Tory ladies. Page 7

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HOTPOINT 9.3 cu.ft. Fridge ■ Auto defrost. ■ Interior light. Model RL81. Was £429.99. BUY NOW PAY APRIL '97 £80 CURRYS PRICE £349.99

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■ Fast freeze switch.
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CURRYS PRICE £199.99
SAVE £50

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HOTPOINT 5.6 cu.ft. Mistral Frost Free Upright Freezer Energy save switch. Model FZ60P. Price Excluding Trade-in £369.99. BUY NOW PAY APRIL '97 £50 TRADE-IN PRICE £319.99

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■ Single 'zoned heat' oven.
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Model GW20BR.
Price Excluding Trade-in £479.99.
£80 TRADE-IN
TRADE-IN PRICE £399.99
6 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION*

HOTPOINT 54cm Eye-level Gas Cooker ■ Zoned heat. ■ Oven with drop down glass door. Model GH81P. Was £699.99. 6 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION* £150 CURRYS PRICE £549.99

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HOTPOINT Slimline Gas Hob ■ 4 powerful burners. ■ Electric ignition. Model 6496P.
HOTPOINT Single Electric Oven ■ Multi-function oven. ■ Temperature indicator. Model BS01P
Total Separate Selling Price £509.97.
6 MONTHS INTEREST FREE OPTION*
£100
CURRYS PACKAGE PRICE £399.99
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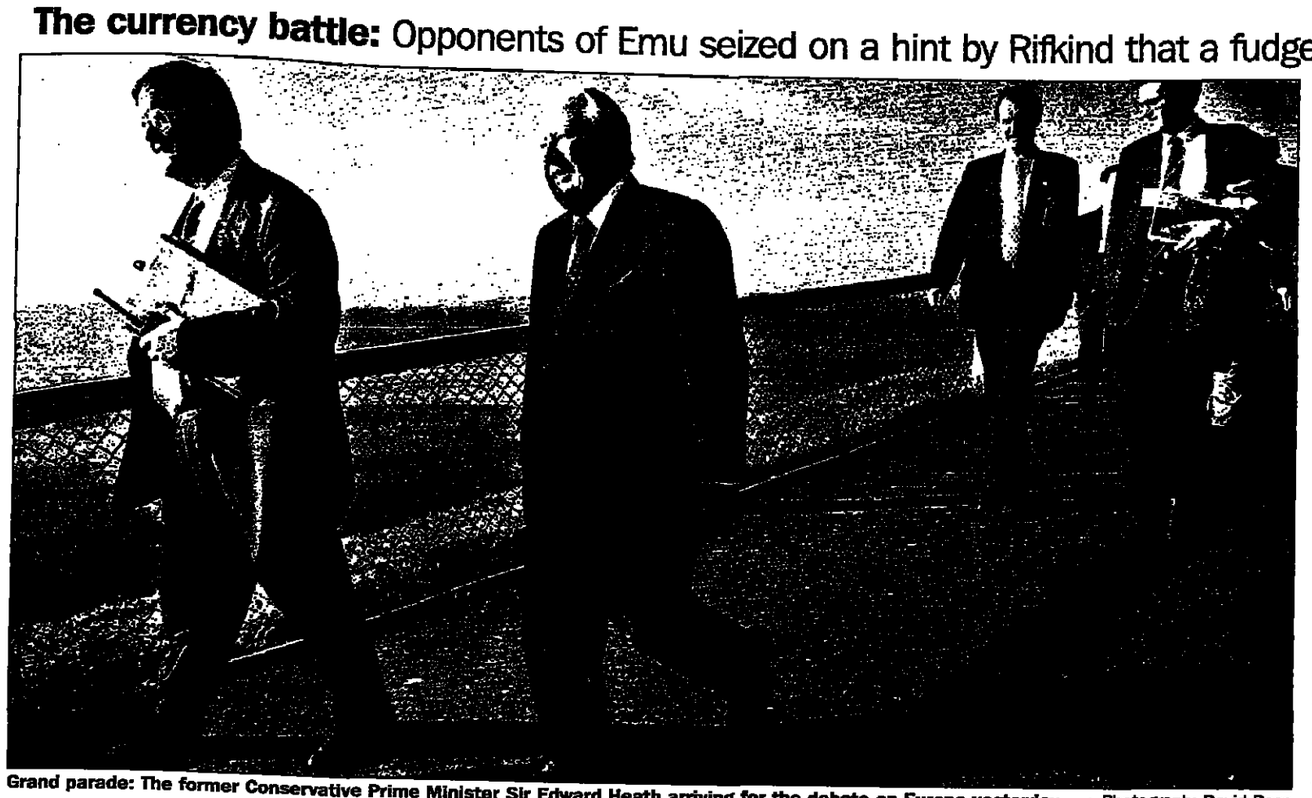
The currency battle: Opponents of Emu seized on a hint by Rifkind that a fudge by France and Germany could keep Britain out



Grand parade: The former Conservative Prime Minister Sir Edward Heath arriving for the debate on Europe yesterday · Photograph: David Rose

Heath returns fire against Euro-sceptics

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

Tory Euro-sceptics yesterday showed no let-up at fringe meetings in their demands for entry to a single currency to be ruled out, despite John Major's appeal for unity.

They in turn came under attack from Sir Edward Heath, the former Prime Minister, who said there would be no change of government policy, and the Euro-sceptics would continue to cause trouble until the election. "They can't possibly change that, so the divisions with these people will remain."

His warning exposed the temporary nature of the unity on Europe shown between Mr Major and Baroness Thatcher 24 hours earlier.

Euro-sceptics heckled Sir Leon Brittan, the European Commissioner, one of the few voices on the Tory fringe calling for Britain to preserve its right to enter a single currency. He warned the Euro-sceptics that unless they united behind Mr Major, "we are dooming ourselves to defeat".

But the Euro-sceptics' anger could be subdued by the emergence of what they believe is a workable compromise.

They focused on a section of Malcolm Rifkind's speech which they claimed had opened the way for entry into a single currency to be ruled out early next year, despite Mr Major's protestations that there would be no change in policy.

The Foreign Secretary reinforced assurances by the Prime Minister that the Government will not join a single European currency if there is a "fudge" over the convergence criteria. "We need to ensure that the economic convergence criteria are not fudged because it would cause economic instability across Europe," he said.

John Redwood, the former minister campaigning against the single currency, said: "It marks an important new development for our European currency policy. The British Government now has an opinion – that pushing monetary union would be damaging. The only currency union on offer is a fudged one. We can all agree on that."

Another leading Euro-sceptic, Norman Lamont, the former Chancellor, told a fringe meeting: "There is no prospect of a Conservative government joining a single currency in the first wave. That is apparent to anyone at this conference."

The Euro-sceptics believe Germany and France will fudge the criteria requiring national debt to be reduced, enabling the Government to reject the single currency before the election. "The Cabinet has already made the decision," one MP said. "It's just a question of timing. It won't happen before the Dublin summit in December."

Mr Rifkind's carefully crafted speech won one of the longest standing ovations of the conference and enhanced his long-term chances for the leadership. He skillfully appealed for unity behind the policy preserving Britain's right to opt in or out of a single currency with a referendum.

But in a clever balancing act, the Foreign Secretary showed his sympathies with the Euro-sceptics. A single currency may never happen, he said. British interests would be seriously damaged by taking premature decisions but he assured the Euro-sceptics: "Be patient. Neither the national interest nor the party interest require us to ride roughshod over views deeply and sincerely held."

Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, called for unity on Europe. "I am sick and tired of Conservatives who fuel the media by sniping at their colleagues," he said.

Minister's six claims fail the factual audit

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

Apart from a promise to curb the right to strike in "monopoly" public services, Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, made six important claims about Britain's economic record in his speech to the Conservative conference.

He declared: "Let's together resolve today, all of us, to confront our opponents with the truth. Let's all fight them with the facts." We have subjected his claims to a factual audit.

Claim: Mr Lang cited the case of Olivier Cadic, a Frenchman who "moved his entire printing company from Paris to Kent just to get away from the Social Chapter".

Fact: Mr Cadic's company, Info-Elec, is moving 15 of his 25 staff from France to Ashford in Kent, as reported exclusively in *The Independent* last month. But the move is nothing to do with the Social Chapter. He made it clear it was because wages and payroll taxes are lower in Britain.

Claim: "Britain is exporting more goods and services abroad today than at any time in our entire history."

Fact: Assuming steady growth, it would be surprising if this were not the case. Britain's share of world trade is its lowest ever – which is also unsurprising, given the expansion of the developing countries.

Claim: "Unemployment in this country has fallen further and faster and for longer under us than at any time in the last 50 years."

Fact: This partly reflects the fact that it had further to fall after exceeding 3m in the early 1980s, the highest for 50 years.

Claim: "We have more of our people in work in this country than in any other major country in Europe."

Fact: People in Britain start work younger and retire later than their Continental counterparts. And for historical reasons more women tend to have paid work in Britain than in other European countries.

Claim: "Britain's growth in productivity has taken us from the bottom of the G7 group of nations to the top."

Fact: There has been a dramatic improvement in productivity in manufacturing, although the rankings depend on choice of dates. The Department of Trade and Industry cited OECD figures for 1980-95, but said Britain was second from bottom in 1973-79. The figures do not apply to service industries, where improvements have been less impressive.

Claim: "More foreign companies have chosen to come here to invest in the past 10 years than to any other country in Europe – over £100bn-worth."

Fact: Inward investment per head of population is four times higher in Belgium. Labour points out that Britain also has the highest "outward investment", capital exports, of any country in the EU.

London Tube next in line for sell-off

STEPHEN GOODWIN and FRAN ABRAMS

London Underground is a prime target for privatisation if the Conservatives are returned to power. John Major told the party conference he would like to see the Tube follow British Rail into the private sector.

The Prime Minister reasserted his determination to continue the privatisation crusade during a question-and-answer session with Tory representatives.

Within a few days, 50 per cent of British Rail would be in private hands, he told the first questioner. Noting that not long ago opinion formers, even within the Tory party, were describing it as "a privatisation too far" he said the service was already getting better. It was getting more personal and there were going to be more trains.

"I would like to see if we can apply these principles to London Underground," Mr Major said. Concern over this summer's strikes on the Tube had already been voiced during a debate on industrial relations.

"It's a remarkable sea change in the last 16 or 17 years," he said. "We should never lose faith in our instinctive belief that private ownership is the best option and should be the first option."

Sir George Young, the Secretary of State for Transport, said a pilot scheme in London in which car tax dodgers had their vehicles clamped had recovered £2m from evaders.

Fifty-eight per cent of the cars clamped had been scrapped because they were not claimed, he said. He added that the Government would soon announce plans to expand the scheme.

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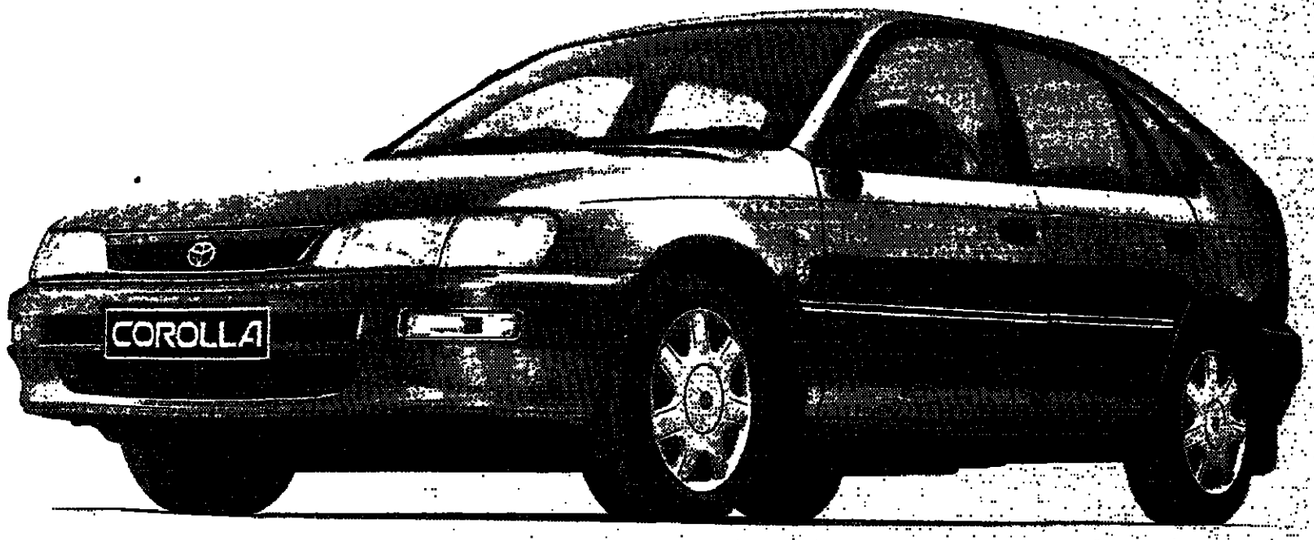

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Lilley offers hand to lone parents

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

A scheme to help 100,000 lone parents escape the benefit trap was announced by Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, in a move to erase the impression that the Tories are intent on attacking single mothers.

The announcement marked a softening of rhetoric for ministers who have accused lone parents of jumping the council-house waiting-list by getting pregnant. Mr Lilley said all the evidence suggested lone parents wanted to work but needed help to get back into the labour market. Twelve areas will be selected for pilot schemes due to start in April and costing £20m.

Lone parents who volunteer for work will be assisted by case-workers to assess any barriers to jobs and to devise a plan to get them into employment. In some areas, lone parents will be eligible for help with childcare expenses.

Private firms will be invited to supply the help to lone parents in four areas drawn from North Hampshire, Preston, Wirral, Northants, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire, Blackburn, Hackney, Central Manchester and Bradford. The companies will be paid according to results.

The scheme, called Parent Plus, will be operated by social-security or employment offices in Warwickshire, Cambridgeshire, North Worcestershire, Motherwell, North Surrey, North Cheshire, Cardiff and Vale, and Sheffield East.

Mr Lilley also confirmed a Fraud Bill to be introduced in the Queen's Speech next month to enable inspectors to cross-check income-tax returns, VAT returns, and benefit claims to stop welfare cheats.

The powers would be targeted at specific fraud and would not allow the disclosure of confidential tax information for general fishing expeditions by fraud inspectors, Mr Lilley said. He left the announcement of the Bill out his speech for lack of time. "The word-counter said I was within my budget, but I was 76 words over," he said later.

"We ought to be able to cross-check this information to find fraudsters who are working and claiming benefit but unintended barriers prevent us. That's absurd," added Mr Lilley. A Compensation Recovery Bill will also be introduced, to force employers to foot the bill for accidents at work.

Mr Lilley has been the Tory Party conference darling in past years but the ovation for his speech appeared more restrained than before. He faced a demand from a councillor for more action to help the elderly avoid having to sell their homes to qualify for means-tested long-term care. Mr Lilley did not reply to an appeal by Jean Burnham, who cited the case of a 79-year-old widow who had to sell her home in order to pay for care after contracting Alzheimer's disease.

Supporters like her will be disappointed that the Government is delaying until after the election the implementation of legislation promised by John Major to tackle the problem. A draft bill will propose a capital disregard for those who have taken out insurance schemes to pay for their long-term care.

In the news: Party members follow John Major's lead of informality and enjoy a relaxed moment yesterday Photograph: David Rose

Ladies who give great ovation

DAVID AARONOVITCH

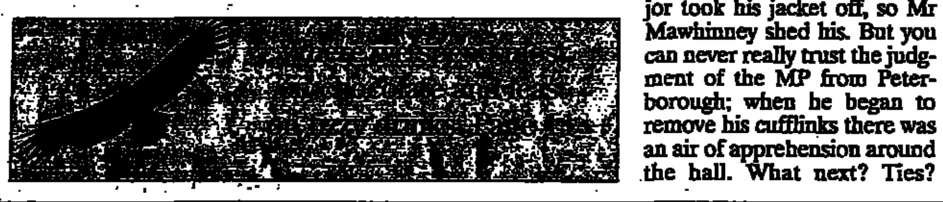
Tory ladies give great ovations. So even the most mundane sentiment uttered by the most nondescript speaker will be met by polite, female applause. Should slighting mention be made of Brussels, or Eurocrats, then there is a more enthusiastic dose of clapping.

This is nothing to what happens though when one of the party big-wigs completes an oration. Then – always – the ovation is standing. As a result it is impossible to tell if a speech has been genuinely well received, or merely a ritual appreciation is being recorded. But, dear readers, quite accidentally yesterday, I discovered the Aaronovitch patent ovation-enthusiasm index, and it came about like this.

As the first Secretary of State of the day completed his "we can win, we will win", (I can't remember who it was; after a while it all tends to blend to one interminable piece of nervous triumphalism), the nice elderly lady next to me rose to applaud. The loss of weight on her spring-loaded chair caused it to rise just as she did, trapping her voluminous skirt behind.

As I looked along the lengthy row of seating, stretching right the way across the conference hall, I saw at least five other skirts similarly snagged, five sets of white calves similarly exposed. Being for the most part elderly, and having passed the age for thigh-hugging, slinky numbers, their long skirts were proving something of an encumbrance. Intrigued, I kept an eye on the skirts throughout the day. And what I realised was that the more the ladies liked the speech, the more impetuously they rose to their feet, and the more likely the skirts were to become lodged in their chairs. *Alors*, a foolproof diagnostic tool.

Thus Ian Lang's ponderous announcement of a clampdown on the few remaining rights enjoyed by trade unionists in this country, rated five skirts. Malcolm Rifkind's well-delivered and intellectually shallow speech (on how everyone in the world wishes they were British) did much better, earning over a dozen exposed pairs of ankles. The best, however, was yet to come.



Late in the morning, the small army of grandees and payroll functionaries were cleared off the set, and the implausible party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, appeared. John Major, he announced, was going to answer impromptu questions from delegates. And on he came. There, in the speaking circle, was a microphone, a Prime Minister and a Mawhinney. It was a bravura performance. As Mr Major roamed the circle from side to side, fielding a selection of questions (some of them genuinely difficult), Mr Mawhinney circled cautiously behind him, like a lion-tamer in the ring with a usually affable, but eccentric beast.

Then, to enhance the impression of informality, Mr Major took his jacket off, so Mr Mawhinney shed his. But you can never really trust the judgment of the MP from Peterborough; when he began to remove his cufflinks there was an air of apprehension around the hall. What next? Ties? Shoes? Vests? We were spared, of course, though the sight of these two jacketless, middle-aged men roaming a small area, fielding a succession of deliveries, put me in mind of a game of beach volleyball as it would be organised by Mary Whitehouse.

The faithful adored it. When the PM finished they arose. And as they did so, hundreds of yards of fabric became caught throughout the hall. Once again I looked down the row, and counted an astonishing 50 skirts, and a pair of plus-fours, now firmly ensnagged in the seats behind.

Fifty skirts, Prime Minister. They must love you.

[illegible]DAY AT THE [illegible]

MAIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

[illegible] the right to strike in [illegible] public services

[illegible] Bill to allow cross-checking of tax, VAT and benefit records

Get 100,000 lone parents off welfare into work

Bill to save the taxpayer £40m in [illegible] for accidents at work

QUOTES OF THE DAY

"**I sleep like a baby; I wake up every [illegible] burst into tears.**" Ian Lang, President of the [illegible]

"**[illegible] bottle of gin for the conference.**" [illegible] at the Marginal Seats Tombola (Guess how many?)

"**We Conservatives do actually find it hard to [illegible] about caring.**" Paul Gray, Preston

"**Harriet Harman...she only scraped on to Labour's National Executive thanks to their assisted [illegible] scheme for less able women.**" Peter Lilley

"**Clare Short...She paid the price for being [illegible] on sofas at weekends and on television.**" Sir George Young

"**We [Conservatives] were not set up to think, [illegible] were not set up to write. We were set up to [illegible].**" Michael Portillo, fringe meeting

"**This is a speech which will get no coverage [illegible] on television news...Because it is [illegible] good news.**" John Gummer

GOOD DAY... ...BAD DAY DEVIL OF THE DAY

John Major broke new conference ground with an hour confidently fielding questions

John Gummer obliged to deliver the most arousal-free speech of the day. Not even a token announcement

The press – [illegible] even more than usual for failing to trumpet Britain's achievement and for its cynicism

THE CROWD-PULLERS ON THE FRINGE

Norman Lamont, more Europhobia 500 people.
Michael Portillo, Conservative Way Forward, 220 people but many disappointed by the Defence Secretary's caution and loyalty.
Sir Teddy Taylor versus Quentin Davies, on the single currency, 200.
Gillian Shephard on tightening discipline in schools, 100 plus

CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE DAY

John Major and **Brian Mawhinney** self-consciously removing their jackets during the Q&A session

THE PARTY TO BE SEEN AT

ITN, drinks at the Highcliff,
British Airways, champagne at the Royal Bath,
Irish Embassy 'stout party' in the conference centre,
Connex Rail Ltd, champagne and croissants at the Highcliff

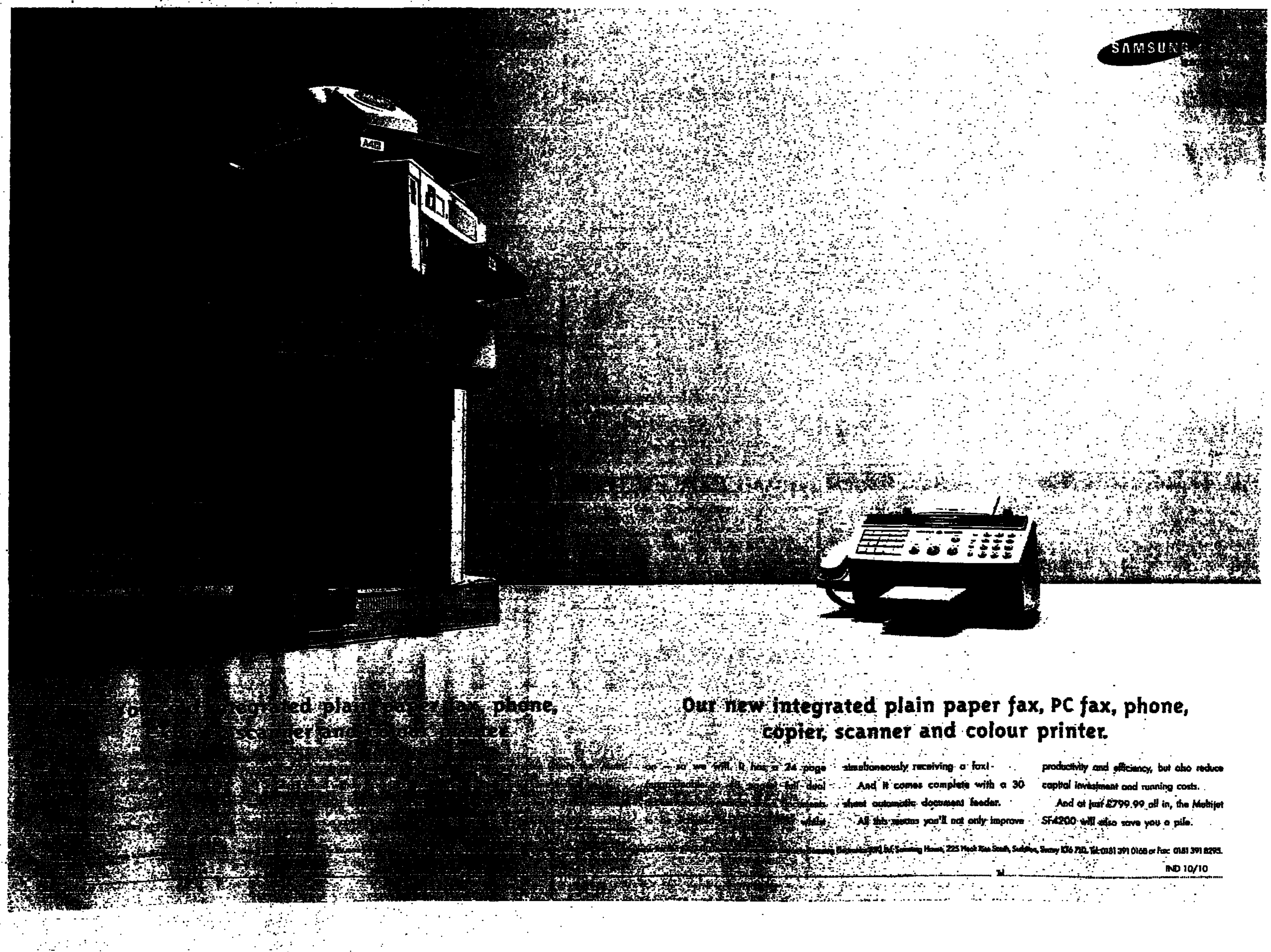
RAPTUREMETER

Malcolm Rifkind Foreign Secretary	**3 min 5 sec** 88 decibels
Ian Lang Industry	**1 min 15 sec** 90 decibels
John Major (question time)	**42 sec** 98 decibels
John Gummer Environment	**22 sec** 86 decibels
Sir George Young Transport	**20 sec** 86 decibels

TODAY'S BUSINESS

National Heritage (Virginia Bottomley), Defence (Michael Portillo), Economy (Kenneth Clarke), Education and employment (Gillian Shepherd), address by Michael Heseltine, deputy prime minister.

Compiled by STEPHEN GOODWIN



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Lang bid to curb monopoly-service strikes

JOHN RENTOUL and BARRIE CLEMENT

Plans to restrict strikes in monopoly public services were announced yesterday by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade.

He told the conference that this summer's stoppages in the railways, London Underground and the Post Office had convinced him to act on a long-standing but unfulfilled Tory aim.

The strikes were "completely unacceptable" and his plans would allow unions to be sued for damages if they organised strikes which were "disproportionately damaging to the public". Sources close to Mr Lang said the legislation would not necessarily be restricted to publicly owned services.

The need to take reforms of trade-union law "one step further" was justified by conjuring up the spectre of the Winter of Discontent in this summer's "reprise, like a bad dream, of those old, ugly attitudes".

Those attitudes had been eradicated in most industries by Tory legislation. "It's in the few remaining monopolies, in the public sector and providing public services, that the virus survives."

Mr Lang promised to publish a "package of new proposals" when the Commons resumes next week, but gave no details of how the plan would work in practice or when it might become law. It is possible it might form part of the Tories' general-election manifesto.

In interviews before and after his speech Mr Lang said the plans would apply to public services which had a monopoly, but that would not necessarily include railway services where there was, for example, an alternative bus service.

His senior advisers said the Government might allow civil courts to decide whether any industrial action was "disproportionately damaging". Ministers, however, could issue a code of practice to guide courts of law. The intention was not to make industrial action impossible, but to limit its impact. Any union leading a strike which caused the complete withdrawal of a monopoly service could be liable to legal action by the employer, or by customers.

Mr Lang's proposals could serve to minimise any splits within the Labour Party. Unions tempted publicly to criticise Tony Blair in the run-up to the election will keep their own counsel when they contemplate the alternative.

The plans, however, may also mean that Labour's present review of industrial action in the public services could also yield tough proposals to compete with the Conservatives.

Mr Lang's plans were attacked by David Blunkett, Labour's education and employment spokesman, as neither new nor workable. Mr Blunkett last month irritated TUC unions with a set of pre-emptive proposals for more use of binding arbitration and for forcing new offers to be put to ballots of union members. The TUC and unions said the plans, if effective, would leave public-sector workers "defenceless".

Rodney Bickerstaffe, general secretary of Unison, the country's largest union, said the best way of averting industrial action was to treat workers decently, pay a proper wage and ensure services were properly funded.

Nursing a grievance: A day of action at a London hospital. Mr Lang's plans would allow unions to be sued for damages Photograph: Jeremy Nicholl

Tory plan could end stoppages in public sector

Union proposals are toughest for years, writes **Barrie Clement**

If Ian Lang is to be taken seriously, the Government is considering the introduction of a law which could weaken trade unionism more than any legislation introduced since the Conservatives came to power in 1979.

By selectively removing immunities from unions engaged in strikes in monopoly services, the Government could make industrial action virtually impossible among millions of employees and would set back the collective rights of workers by a century.

But is Mr Lang to be taken seriously? How far is he prepared to go? Whitehall officials have indicated privately that the President of the Board of Trade is simply indulging in pre-election populism. The suggestion may well appear in the Conservative Manifesto, but civil servants argue that the legal difficulties are such that it is highly unlikely to see the legislative light of day.

There is always the possibility, however, that Mr Lang is in earnest. His senior advisers insist that he is.

Under the proposals, presumably, the Communication Workers' Union could have been sued by the Royal Mail which lost business through the present postal dispute. The union could also have been taken to court by other companies and individuals who could prove a material loss as a consequence of the 24-hour stoppages. Both the rail unions – Aslef and RMT – may have been liable to legal action for damages incurred through the London Underground stoppages. The RMT could have been sued for recent "overground" walkouts.

Ministers would have to decide which services came within the scope of the act. Mr Lang's advisers are keen to ensure the law covers any monopoly service. Sources close to Mr Lang argue that limited industrial action might not fall foul of the law, but the shutdown of, say BT, would probably come within the scope of the act.

Removal of immunities could backfire. If bona fide unions found it difficult or impossible to lead strikes, workers might be tempted to form their own informal groups to organise industrial action. If such groups had no assets, then individuals would be the subject of litigation, leading to the seizure of personal property. Do the Conservatives really want to go to those lengths?

Even Mrs Thatcher was finally convinced that removing immunities was not a practical proposition.

IN THE SUNDAY REVIEW

Once he controlled a superpower; now he's all but forgotten. But he'd still like to change the world. Mikhail Gorbachev discusses power, politics and American movies with Ian Parker

■

Plus: Helen Fielding on country house hotels, Terence Conran on design, and new fiction by Junot Díaz

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Nightmare for parents over school choice

JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

Choosing a secondary school will become a nightmare for parents as the Government's proposals for more selection turn admissions into a free-for-all, headteachers said yesterday.

Angry members of both headteachers' organisations lambasted the plans on the eve of the speech by Gillian Shephard, Secretary of State for Education, to the Conservative party conference.

Most parents would have less, not more choice, they said, because schools would be choosing parents. They would have to make many more applications and get to grips with different admissions arrangements and selection tests for every school. Appeals to admissions panels would rocket.

The Secondary Heads Association said it had not been so angry about a White Paper for 20 years. The proposals for schools to select up to half their pupils were "undemocratic and unfair". Individual schools would be able to select more pupils without reference to the rest of the community.

Education Plus in The Tabloid

The National Association of Head Teachers said different types of school would be able to select 20 to 50 per cent of their pupils. Parents would have to make multiple applications to hedge their bets "entering their child for a variety of selection tests, criteria hurdles and interviews to safeguard against not getting their first choice".

Bruce Douglas, the secondary heads' vice-president, said: "This unplanned selection means the return of the secondary modern school and that doesn't seem to us to serve the needs of the 21st century."

The secondary heads, including those running grant-maintained schools, said they were furious about the denigration in the White Paper of the many successful local authority-run comprehensives.

In a paper, they warned that such schools would "at a stroke be sacrificed on the altar of dogmatism". "There is not a scrap of evidence that the most able children cannot and do not achieve the best of which they are capable in non-selective schools and a great deal of evidence from successful schools that the opposite is true."

Struggling inner-city schools would not get the support they needed. The measures would "encourage even more parents of able children to transport them across cities to schools in more privileged environments".

The selection proposals were "incoherent, unfair, divisive, cost-ineffective, administratively burdensome and potentially gender-biased".

Because girls do better in tests than boys, more selection would lead to the creation of sink schools filled with disaffected and demoralised boys.

The secondary heads say they are not against selection *per se*. Their president, Peter Miller, deputy head of Wrenn grant maintained school, Northampton, said: "We are against this unplanned and undemocratic extension of selection where individual schools can make their own decision and there is no mechanism for involving the rest of the community."

Both associations query whether parents are clamouring for more selection.

Trendy teachers are top in maths

WENDY BERLINER

Pupils taught GCSE maths in a traditional way gained poorer GCSE results and were less able to use maths in real life than pupils taught by "progressive" methods, according to new research.

Dr Jo Boaler, a lecturer and researcher in mathematics at King's College, London, monitored 300 pupils from two London state schools for three years, from the age of 13 until they had taken their GCSEs.

In the traditional school, pupils were taught using whole class teaching, text books and frequent tests – the kind of methods being encouraged by Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, the Secretary of State for Education Gillian Shephard, and leading right-wing educationists. There were high standards of discipline, pupils were motivated and worked hard, and they were in sets of similar ability pupils.

By comparison, at the "progressive" school, pupils worked on open-ended projects in mixed ability groups in every maths lesson. There was very little whole class teaching and discipline was "extremely relaxed".

At the start of the three years there were no differences between the two sets of pupils in terms of mathematical attainment, gender, ethnic origin or class. Both schools had good maths teachers. But at the end of the three years pupils in the project-based school attained significantly higher grades, not because they knew more maths but because they had developed a more effective way of using it.

At the textbook school, many of the pupils were unable to use maths in day-to-day situations because they could not adapt their formal textbook procedures to anything other than textbook questions.

Dr Boaler argues that international maths tests in which British children have a poor showing assess knowledge that has little educational value and is increasingly incompatible with the demands of the modern world.

Full story: Education Plus

Tragic victor: British racer Dick Seaman (right), winner of the 1938 German Grand Prix, with Korpsführer Adolf Huhnlein, the Nazi officer in charge of motor racing. Seaman was burned to death a year later when he crashed in the Belgian Grand Prix Photograph: Chris Nixon Collection

Car fans search for lost Mercedes of the Nazis' Grand Prix hero

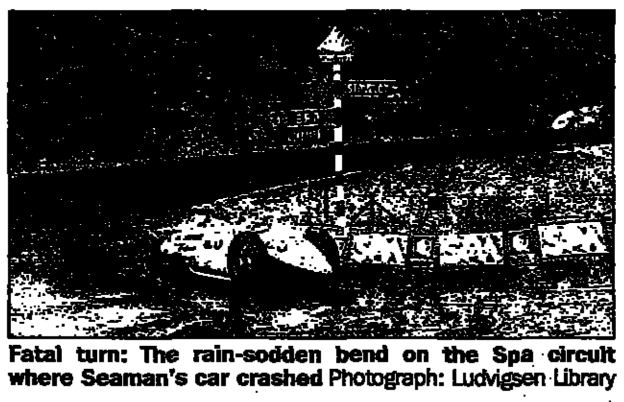
CHRIS MOWBRAY

A motor-racing enthusiast is planning to unravel a 57-year-old mystery by searching for the historic Grand Prix car which caused the death of the driving ace who was his boyhood hero.

Maurice Owen believes that the Mercedes in which Dick Seaman was killed lies buried under a chapel in the grounds of the former Worcestershire manor house which was his family home.

Seaman was burned to death in a crash at the La Source hairpin bend on the Spa motor racing circuit during the Belgian Grand Prix on 27 June 1939.

He was the son of a wealthy British Nazi sympathiser and the only non-German member of the world-beating Mercedes motor racing team which was the pride of Nazi Germany. He started driving for the team in 1937 and won four races for them. Yet he was himself an anti-Nazi and his mother, Lilian Bettes-Seaman, who was held under house arrest during the Second World War, never forgave him when he patriotically had his silver Mercedes repainted in British Racing Green.



Fatal turn: The rain-sodden bend on the Spa circuit where Seaman's car crashed Photograph: Ludvigsen Library

Mr Owen, 70, the technical director of the Morgan Motor Company, believes that after her son's death, Mrs Bettes-Seaman had the wreck of his car brought to England and buried under a chapel which she turned into a shrine in his memory. Mr Owen and a group of fellow-enthusiasts are seeking permission to search for the wreckage with a thermal imaging camera in the grounds of the family's former home, Pull Court at Longdon, near Upton-upon-Severn, which is now the privately run Bredon school. The group, which includes a former motoring journalist and the American agent for Morgan Motors, is planning to make a film about the venture.

"I have been aware for some time of rumours that Dick Seaman's mother, who was an odd sort of person, brought the car back to Britain, and it is a fascinating story," Mr Owen said. "This is particularly interesting for me because I used to live near Pull Court as a boy and often went up there to talk to the mechanics as they were working on the car. I even met Dick Seaman himself once and found him a very pleasant young undergraduate. He used to test his car up and down the drive outside the house."

The theory is that Mrs Bettes-Seaman obtained the remains of the crashed Mercedes with the help of Hitler's Foreign Minister, Count von Ribbentrop, who was a personal friend and who was often a guest at Pull Court before the outbreak of war. The engine was retained by Mercedes and is now exhibited in the company's museum in Stuttgart.

Mercedes has four of the cars which made up the six-strong racing team. The sixth was owned by Nikolai Ceausescu, the late Romanian Communist dictator, and is thought to be in pieces in farm buildings somewhere in Romania.

هكذا من الأصل

Good times roll as Britons spend on fun

Statistics show the rise of a leisure society. Glenda Cooper reports

The days of the workaholic are over. The British are turning into a leisure society, spending nearly as much on enjoying themselves each week as they do on food.

Average family spending on leisure (which includes going to the cinema and theatre, sports and hobbies) has risen to £45.80 per week, just behind the two necessities of food (£52.90) and housing (£48.20). As a percentage of weekly expenditure, food has dropped from nearly one-third in the 1960s to around one-sixth today. This can partly be explained by cheaper staple foods and higher incomes.

The annual Family Expenditure Survey, carried out by the Office for National Statistics, is a snapshot of how we spend our money today. It found this year that on average a household spends £290 per week, a rise of 2 per cent on last year despite income rising 3.2 per cent.

Among the wealthiest this rises to £623, while the poorest can afford only £87.80. Incomes vary between £875 per week for the top 20 per cent and £83.60 for the poorest 20 per cent.

Between 1965 and 1995-96, weekly income from wages and salaries declined from 76 per cent to 64 per cent of total income. The report's editor, John King, said this was due to the population ageing and receiving most of its income from pensions.

Leisure has now become an important part of the British lifestyle despite a recent report from the European Commission which found that that we work the most hours in Europe. On average we spent 90p a week on cinema admissions, £2.69 on television and satellite rental and £1.93 on sports admissions and subscriptions.

Gambling payments were up more than £1 from £2.51 to £3.81 as the National Lottery maintains its grip on the nation's wallets, rising by 13 per cent since last year. Officials from the Office for National Statistics think the amount may be much higher when scratchcards are taken into account. Mr King said he believed it reflected only 20 per cent of the cash spent on cards. At the same time, as charities have feared, cash donations were down 35p per week.

Spending on televisions, videos and computers was up slightly, as it was on camcorders, cameras and camping equipment. Holidays, both at home and abroad, also ate up more money than last year.

The popularity of eating out and snack meals out continued to grow, up to £10.39 per week on average from £9.81 last year. Eating out was most popular in London and the South-east while Northerners spent least. Expenditure on take-away meals eaten at home was highest in Northern Ireland but well below the UK average in Wales, East Anglia and the South-west.

The success of supermarkets was reflected in figures showing the struggles of the butcher, the baker, greengrocer and fishmonger. Two-thirds of bread is bought at supermarkets, on which shoppers also rely as the main supplier of their fish. Only a quarter of vegetables sold comes from local shops.

However, the survey may indicate the survival of the milkman. Families spend 98p a week on milk from supermarkets, and £1.48 on buying milk from other stores.

One of the largest expenses for any household continues to be transport.

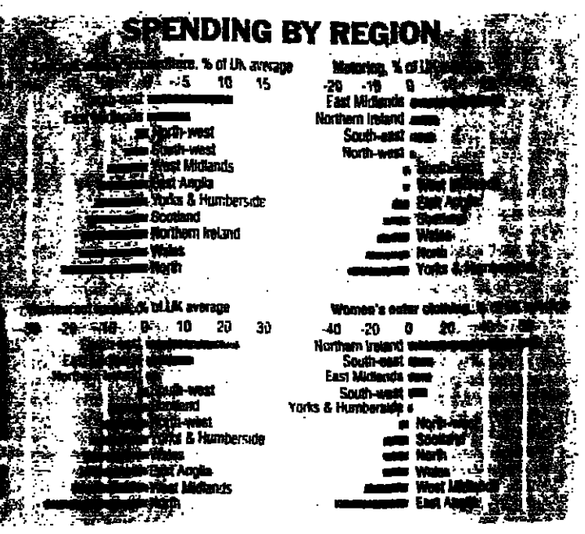
The FES discovered that a family with one car spends just under £40 a week and this nearly doubled if they were a two-car household. The main component of running costs was fuel and oil. Secondhand cars remain most popular, with more than three times as many families buying used rather than new.

What people choose to spend their money on threw up intriguing regional variations. The level of spending varied from £258 in the North to £327 in Greater London. While Londoners have to fork out £61.40 per week for housing, their equivalents in Northern Ireland are spending only an average £27.50.

Living up to stereotypes, the South-east spent most on wines, Scotland spent the most on spirits and liqueurs and the North-west spent the most on beer and cider. Spending on tea was close to 50p in all regions.

And one health message appears to have got through. Tobacco is one area which has consistently fallen since 1960. In 1960 it accounted for 5.9 per cent: now it has more than halved to 2 per cent.

■ *Family Spending*: Stationery Office; available from bookshops priced £35.95.



Who spends what, and where

■ Northern Ireland [illegible] £8.10 a week [illegible]
■ Yorkshire and [illegible] average [illegible] number of [illegible]
■ East Anglia [illegible] £1.70 a week [illegible]
■ South-east [illegible]
■ Greater London [illegible] in Britain at £32 [illegible]
■ South-[illegible] drinks [illegible]
■ East [illegible] £5 [illegible]
■ West [illegible] video [illegible]
■ Scotland [illegible] Sports and [illegible] tea [illegible] £2.60 [illegible]
■ Wales [illegible] and half [illegible] product [illegible]
■ North [illegible] alcoholic [illegible]
■ The [illegible]

DAILY POEM

Code Poem for the French Resistance

By Leo Marks

The Life that I have
Is all that I have.
And the life that I have
Is yours.

The love that I have
Of the life that I have
Is yours and yours and yours.

A sleep I shall have
A rest I shall have,
Yet death be but a pause.

For the peace of my years
In the long green grass
Will be yours and yours and yours.

Today is National Poetry Day. The Poetry Library handles thousands of inquiries each year from people desperate to track down authors and poems from one or two remembered lines. The library's most frequent request is for Leo Marks's Code Poem, which appears in the film *Carve Her Name With Pride*. Marks was a top wartime cryptographer with the Special Operations Executive, sending military information into Europe encoded in poems.

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Power of US military in league of its own

Position as world leader undented by cuts. Andrew Marshall reports

America's military hegemony remains unchallenged despite heavy budget cuts, the International Institute for Strategic Studies said in its annual report yesterday.

"Despite major reductions, the United States still possesses the most powerful conventional and nuclear armed forces in the world," it says in *The Military Balance 1996-97*. The US is also by far the world's largest arms producer, dominating the defence market.

In the last year alone, the institute points out, the US has provided 20,000 troops to the peace implementation force in Bosnia, deployed two carrier battle groups to the waters off Taiwan to ease tensions between China and Taiwan, and launched new raids on Iraq.

The US has scaled down its forces, cutting from 18 army divisions to 10, and from 25 Air Force tactical wings to 13. The number of personnel on active duty is to reduce from 2 million to 1.5 million. But the sheer size of what remains, combined with continuing investment in high-tech weaponry which gives it a technological edge, keep America superior.

The Department of Defense is planning to enhance its capability in advanced munitions, battlefield surveillance, strategic mobility and the readiness of reserve forces," the institute says. "Numerous improvements to command, control, communications, computers and intelligence for naval, land and air forces will be implemented," said the report.

Washington has committed itself to keeping around 100,000 troops in Europe, and about the same in East Asia and the Pacific, as well as deployments of pre-positioned equipment in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean. America's policy is to maintain the capability to engage in two simultaneous major regional conflicts.

The US also dominates the arms market. World arms sales in 1995 rose by 15 per cent to \$30.2bn (£19bn) because of increased demand from the Middle East and East Asia, the institute estimates. The US accounted for \$13.3bn, or 44 per cent of the total. Russia almost doubled its total to \$3bn, but was still in second place.

Russia is, the report makes clear, not in the same league as the United States any more. "The decline in capability in all departments of the Russian armed forces seems set to continue," the institute concludes. Since 1992, military spending has fallen by about 45 per cent, though Moscow still tries to keep up pretensions of a global role.

"The Russians are making a great effort to keep themselves out there, so to speak, on the world stage in certain key areas" the institute's deputy director Rose Gottemoeller told a press conference. However, she discounted claims from the Russian military that poverty was pushing the military towards mutiny. "It's an extremely serious problem, but there are no signs that troops will drive into the Kremlin in tanks," she said.

In Europe, aspirations to a defence and security identity that is not dominated by the US are not matched by resources, the report notes. "There is a mismatch between the call for a stronger European pillar in the Alliance and the provision of military capabilities."

Almighty America: An F18 Hornet taking off from the USS *Carl Vinson* during recent manoeuvres in the Gulf

Israel playing with fire, King Hussein warns

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Suddenly King Hussein, the one Arab leader who seemed prepared to do business with Benjamin Netanyahu, is distancing himself from the Israeli Prime Minister.

In an interview with an Arabic newspaper this week, he said that if Mr Netanyahu did not make peace with the Palestinians, anything could happen, "including a revival of 1991, when Netanyahu wore his gas mask on television".

King Hussein's sudden belligerence and suggestion of a return to the days of the Gulf war is a nasty surprise for Israelis. The peace treaty signed with Jordan in 1994 was universally popular in Israel, if not in Jordan. Among Arab leaders the King was the least critical of Mr Netanyahu when he won the election in May.

Now, in an interview with the daily *Ashraq al-Awsat*, King Hussein has asked whether Israel wants to return to a fortress mentality and an arrogant feeling of power. "I just hope that he [Netanyahu] realises that he has to deal with Arafat and the Palestinians as equal partners," he said. "Those with limited perspectives" – presumably a reference to Mr Netanyahu – were putting the peace process into reverse.

King Hussein also complained that, although he had had a meeting with Dr Dore Gold, Mr Netanyahu's special envoy, just before the tunnel under the Muslim quarter in Jerusalem was opened, he was not told about it. Jordan has complained that the opening of the tunnel breaks the 1994 peace treaty, which gives Jordan a special place in protecting the Muslim holy places of Jerusalem.

Israel, too, appears to be alarmed by the change in relations between the two nations. "Israeli officials believe the sharp deterioration in the tight relations with Jordan is the most worrying aspect of Israel's relations with the Arab world," Israeli army radio said.

"The peace with Jordan is in a state of crisis – not just more tension, but a collapse of the entire fabric of trust, dialogue and discrete contacts between the two states."

Outrage as Asian communities come under fire Down Under Page 15

هكذا من الأصل

Scientologists defend the faith in court

MARY DEJEVSKY,
Paris

Shortly after 5am on 24 March 1988, Patrice Vic, a married man aged 31 with two children, threw himself off the balcony of the family's 12th floor flat in Lyon, saying that there was "no other way".

More than eight years later, and after the slow turning of a great many judicial wheels, his suicide is at the centre of a court case in which a clutch of former leaders of the Church of Scientology in France find themselves accused of "involuntary manslaughter and fraud".

The crux of the case, which has just ended with judgment reserved until next month, is whether a direct link can be proved between Vic's death and the actions of certain members of the local Scientology church. Across France, however, the seven-day trial in Lyon has been seen as a trial of the Church of Scientology itself, the verdict being bound to affect the workingsof the church here.

Chief among 23 defendants is the former head of the Lyons branch of the Scientology Church, Jean-Jacques Mazier. There is also a Catholic priest, and several individuals accused of practising medicine illegally – mostly psychiatric treatment.

In the run-up to the trial, there were reports of threats made against the judge and witnesses. Two Scientologists were convicted of threatening a psychiatrist, Jean-Marie Abgrall, who had been called as an expert witness in the Lyon trial.

The fact that the case was brought at all was due to Vic's widow, Nelly, who began by instituting civil proceedings, with the support of a sympathetic investigating judge, Georges Fenech. "One day," she told the court, "we received a brochure. Out of curiosity, my husband decided to give it a try... it turned into harassment... and that caused tension between us."

Later, with her husband, she met Mr Mazier who offered a "purification" cure for 30,000 francs. She refused it, saying it was "pure madness", but Mr Mazier persisted: "If it is a question of money," he allegedly responded, "you can get a loan." That evening, her husband demanded to see her payslips. She refused. At 5am the next morning, after a sleepless night, he got up, saying: "Don't stop me: it's the only way", and made for the balcony. "And that was it," she said.

Her evidence was supported by the psychiatrist, Mr Abgrall, who describes Scientology – which was founded in 1954 by the American, Ron Hubbard – as "mental manipulation brought about by progressive indoctrination, destabilising an individual and reconditioning his mind along new lines". This view was opposed by a number of sociologists who argued that Scientology was, "a religion", and supported by certain French commentators who warned that if the defendants were convicted just for being Scientologists, it would jeopardise freedom of thought, speech and religion – all that France holds dear. The defence counsel insisted not only that their clients were innocent of the specific charges brought, but that the trial itself was a perversion of the judicial system. In being asked to judge the Church of Scientology, one of the defence lawyers argued, as the case wound up on Tuesday, "the court is being asked to do the government's work for it and perform what is essentially a social and preventative function. That is wrong".

> 'We are being asked to do government work and perform what is a social and preventative function'

Another for the defence argued: "The problem of sects exists, and it should be discussed. That can be done on television and in parliament, but at the Lyon court, we have to separate individual responsibilities. The questions are simple: does administering a personality test amount to fraud? Can a consultation be... illegal?"

There can be little doubt that guilty verdicts would please at least one section of French officialdom. The authorities have been highly sensitive to the activities of sects in France for several years, but their concern was dramatically heightened last December by the mass suicide in the French Alps of 16 members of the Order of the Solar Temple.

A parliamentary commission on sects in France which reported last spring was shocked to find that there were 173 sects operating in France and that the Church of Scientology was one of the largest. The prime recommendation of its report was for a legal distinction to be drawn between "religious movements" and "cults", and for the law to be applied with more alacrity against cults suspected of abusing children, exerting pressure on individuals, or misusing funds.

However, this report also recognised the difficulty of distinguishing between such categories and of legislating where intervention could be interpreted as a violation of religious and other freedoms. No draft law has yet been tabled.

The judgment in the Lyon case is due on 22 November. A "guilty" verdict would give an extra push to the process of framing a law on sects. It could also mean that the Church of Scientology would find its activities in France more closely watched. But the depth of French intellectual sympathy for individual freedom of belief will ensure that future cases will be just as keenly argued.

Madeira's rebel priests choose politics to beat inequality

JAVIER GARCIA
El Pais

Funchal—A socialist, two communists and three left-wing priests have galvanised the campaign for Sunday's regional elections in the Portuguese island of Madeira, a fiefdom of the conservative Social Democratic Party since the Carnation Revolution of 1974.

The revolutionary priests have decided to combat what they call "the inequalities and abuses" perpetrated by the regional president, Alberto Joao Jardim, during 18 years in power in "clear concubinage with the church hierarchy" on the island, which is 1,000km south-west of Lisbon.

The candidacies have prompted confrontation among the island's parish priests and aroused the fury of the Bishop of Funchal, Teodoro de Faria, who has warned that "conscious Christians must not vote for them". The rebel priests, however, are aiming to erode an absolute majority that they believe has causedenormous injustice.

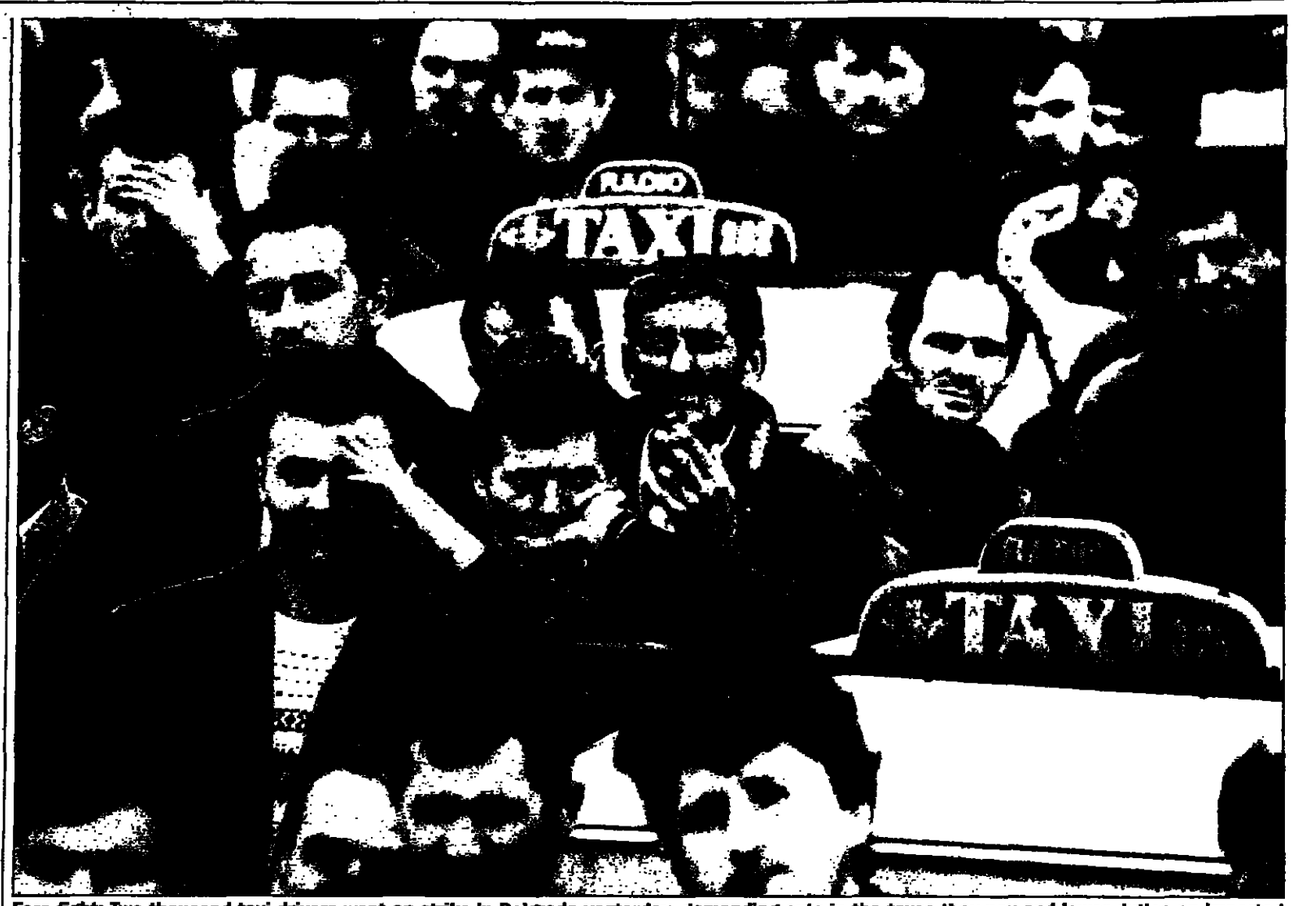
Their strategy is to inform people of the serious problems: unemployment, illiteracy and rural poverty. The first "black sheep in God's fold" – to use the Bishop's expression – is Fr Edgar Silva, 33, who heads the regional assembly list for the CDU Communist coalition. An advocate of "liberation theology" and founder of an international Catholic aid movement for street children, Padre Silva fights against what he calls the *democratura*.

"An expression my friends in South America use," he said, "for an apparently democratic structure to conceal discrimination and intolerance that indicate totalitarian tendencies." Even a small electoral advance on the one deputy they now have would make a difference, he believes. "Three CDU deputies would do more to defend the people than 50 of the PSD," he said.

But Padre Silva admits that the church hierarchy's opposition would discourage many. "The people are frightened of us because the PSD and church leaders have succeeded in stigmatising the left; there is a dangerous discourse that associates the left, particularly communism, with Satan." Padre Silva believes it is easy to explain why the political opposition is led by priests: "It is part of the history of Madeira. The blood coursing through our veins is that of slaves... sugarcane slaves, outlaws, deportees and prisoners. We had a feudal land structure. This prompted rebellion against those who enriched themselves at the slaves' expense. Some acts of rebellion were led by priests."

Fr Mario Tavares, a former parish priest and now the CDU's only deputy, is number two on the list after Fr Silva. "For the past 20 years," he said, "the church leadership has been servile to the regional government in return for continuous subsidies." Last year the Church of Madeira received the equivalent of £1.5m in subsidies from the regional government, he said.

The socialist candidate, Fr Martins Junior, wants more autonomy for the island. "At the oment our autonomy begins and ends in the *Quinta Vigia* [regional presidential palace]. Our people are marginalised and our local power is stifled."



Fare fight: Two thousand taxi drivers went on strike in Belgrade yesterday, demanding cuts in the taxes they pay and lower duties on imported second-hand cars. Serbia has been hit by a wave of strikes as the economy worsens Photograph: Reuters

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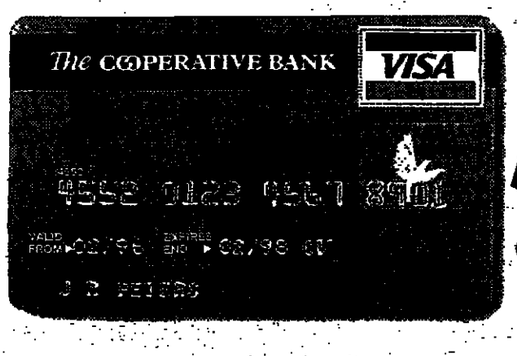

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Biker chick and invisible woman race for the White House

Love me do: Once Hillary was part of Bill Clinton's act, but no longer. Elizabeth Dole, though, has come out fighting for her husband, Bob Photographs: AP, Reuter

THE US PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 96

Hillary Clinton is being kept out of sight, but Elizabeth Dole is being played for all she is worth. **Rupert Cornwell** reports

The image is deliberately fuzzy and timeless: the candidate's wife clad in a warm apricot-coloured suit, on a sofa in an airy flower-filled living room that recalls the North Carolina where she grew up. In her rich southern accent, she extols the virtues of her husband. "Bob Dole," she says, "doesn't make promises he can't keep."

Of the television advertisements the Dole camp has come up with, this one is perhaps the most effective yet, simultaneously rubbing away the veneer of harshness from the candidate's image, reaching out for the women's vote and underlining the issues of trust and character that are moving centre-stage in the campaign. But then again, with the possible exception of the retired general Colin Powell, Elizabeth Dole is perhaps the most potent weapon her husband has.

With less than four weeks left before the poll on 5 November, one of the campaign's most intriguing sub-plots has been the role of the wives. They have much in common; both boasting glittering Ivy League academic resumes, both trained as lawyers, both emblems of emancipated, high-achieving womanhood at the end of the 20th century, and neither of them one of nature's cookie-bakers.

But where Mrs Dole seems omnipresent, Hillary Clinton is almost invisible. Not a squeak is to be heard of Bill Clinton's campaign call of 1992, "Vote for me and get two for the price of one." On the stump, Mr Dole constantly refers to his wife: Mr Clinton almost never – and understandably so.

Among women, and in upmarket East Coast enclaves like Massachusetts, the First Lady remains a popular figure. But she is identified with many of the least loved policies of the Clinton administration, above all, the failed attempt at health-care reform. More generally, she is, rightly or wrongly, perceived as the embodiment of the "liberalism" that her husband is trying at all costs to avoid. "I'd be very surprised if they ever let her talk on camera," Alex Castellanos, a Republican media expert, drily commented last week. With Elizabeth Dole, the opposite is true.

Far more articulate than her husband, she averages 20 or 30 public appearances a week – as many as he does, or more. Some are routine speeches at fund-raising events and women's clubs, variations on the theme of Bob Dole as "a workhorse not a show horse", contrasting the plain-spoken Republican with the glib, flashy and deceitful occupant of the White House.

Others are less conventional – none more so than when she took to a motorcycle and roared on to the set of Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* last week, wearing not her usual pearls and pastel-shaded *tailleur* but jeans and a leather jacket emblazoned with the words "Bikers for Bob". Then came one of Campaign 96's more absurd lines: "I've come a long way – from Harvard Law School to biker chick."

Not quite what is expected from an elegant 60-year-old woman who has served in the cabinets of two Republican presidents and is on leave of absence from a $200,000-a-year (£130,000) post as head of the American Red Cross. But her purpose is clear – to remind viewers that Bob Dole is a human being, not a one-dimensional, stiff-suited cut-out who has spent his entire life on Capitol Hill, severed from the real world.

The advertisement serves to the same end. With Mrs Dole's insistence that "I know Bob Dole and you can trust him", it is part of Mr Dole's long-awaited autumn offensive on the Clinton character issue, which his advisers believe offers his best and perhaps last chance of erasing the president's big lead in the polls.

Plainly invigorated by his widely praised showing in Sunday's television debate, Mr Dole opened hostilities during a bus tour of New Jersey this week, and in a new batch of radio advertisements saying that America suffered from a moral crisis, originating "not in your house but the White House". It is now open season on Mr Clinton's slipperiness, Whitewater and other lapses.

Most important of all however, Mrs Dole is a bridge to the women's vote that eludes her husband. The two candidates are running roughly level among men. Among women however, polls put the President 20 or more points ahead. Unless Mr Dole can sharply reduce that lead, he is all but doomed.

Thus far his wife's performances have won glowing reviews but not, it would seem, many new votes among that fashionable new swing vote of 1996, the suburban "soccer moms" exhausted by juggling jobs, home, and their children's sports fixtures. If anyone can bring the "soccer moms" back into the fold however, it is probably Elizabeth Dole.

$1m price of Sarah's secrets

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Sarah Netanyahu, wife of the Israeli Prime Minister, is at the centre of a dispute over a book her ex-husband plans to publish about the seven years he was married to her.

Israeli television said Binyamin Netanyahu and his aides failed to persuade Doron Neuberger, a teacher on a kibbutz, not to go into print. The Prime Minister's office said Mr Neuberger demanded $1m (£660,000) to remain silent.

Interest in Mrs Netanyahu has been keen since the time, shortly after her husband became prime minister, that their nanny said she had been dismissed for burning the soup, and spoke of Mrs Netanyahu's obsessive cleanliness.

Mr Neuberger, who divorced Mrs Netanyahu in 1987, said her access to secret documents endangered the state; he wrote the book after seeing Mr and Mrs Netanyahu on television reviewing state papers together.

Mrs Netanyahu: Hot news

Exactly what is in the book nobody knows but the nanny affair gave bizarre glimpses into the home life of the Netanyahus. A second nanny, dismissed after a week, said Mrs Netanyahu allowed her to eat an egg only once every two days, on grounds of expense.

Before the nanny revelations, Mrs Netanyahu had attracted attention only once when, during the battle for the Likud party leadership four years ago, she stood by her husband when he admitted to adultery. In the election campaign this year she was with him the whole time, apparently as an example of family values, but said little.

Even before Mr Neuberger emerged from his kibbutz to tell all, the *Hartsufim* television programme, which uses puppets, had planned to feature the Netanyahus. The protagonists will be a family of cockroaches living under Mrs Netanyahu's kitchen and will comment on her problems with Binyamin, nannies and her ex-husband.

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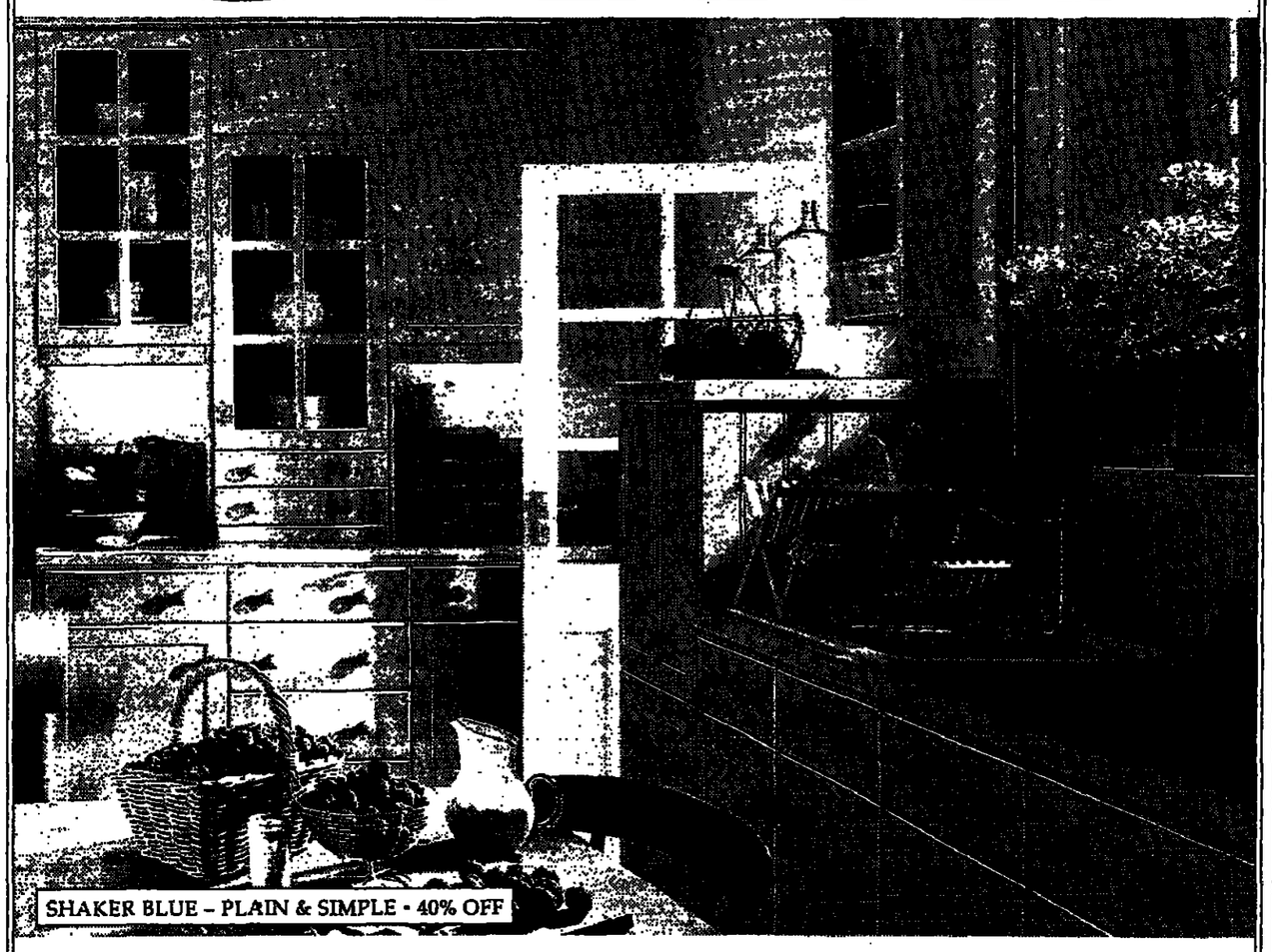

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Food for thought
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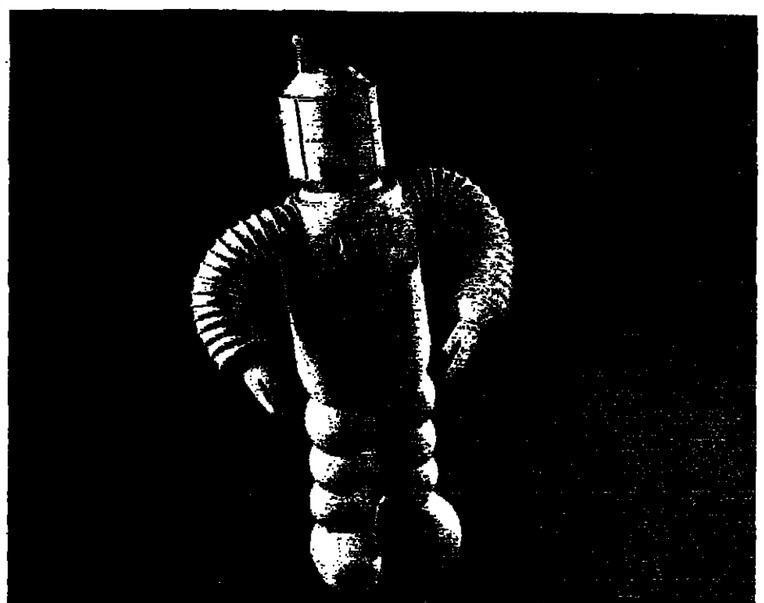

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Minorities under fire: Feelings high as xenophobia hits nationalist nerve in Australia and New Zealand

Outcry over attacks on Asians

ROBERT MILLIKEN
Sydney

A new backlash against Asian immigrants and Aborigines has hit Australia, and has brought political pressure on John Howard, the prime minister, to defuse the furore.

The outcry was sparked by Pauline Hanson, a woman whom few Australians outside her home town of Ipswich in Queensland had heard of until recently, but who is now a household name. The former fish-and-chip shop owner was elected to federal parliament last March as an Independent MP. The Liberal Party, which Mr Howard leads, had ditched her after she attacked Aborigines and Asians in her election campaign, and called for an end to immigration.

But, since Ms Hanson repeated her views in her maiden speech to parliament a month ago, all hell has broken loose. She has appeared on television all over the country, been flooded with invitations to speak at functions and was given a standing ovation when she spoke at a fund-raising dinner in Brisbane last week for the National Party, the junior partner with the Liberals in the ruling conservative coalition.

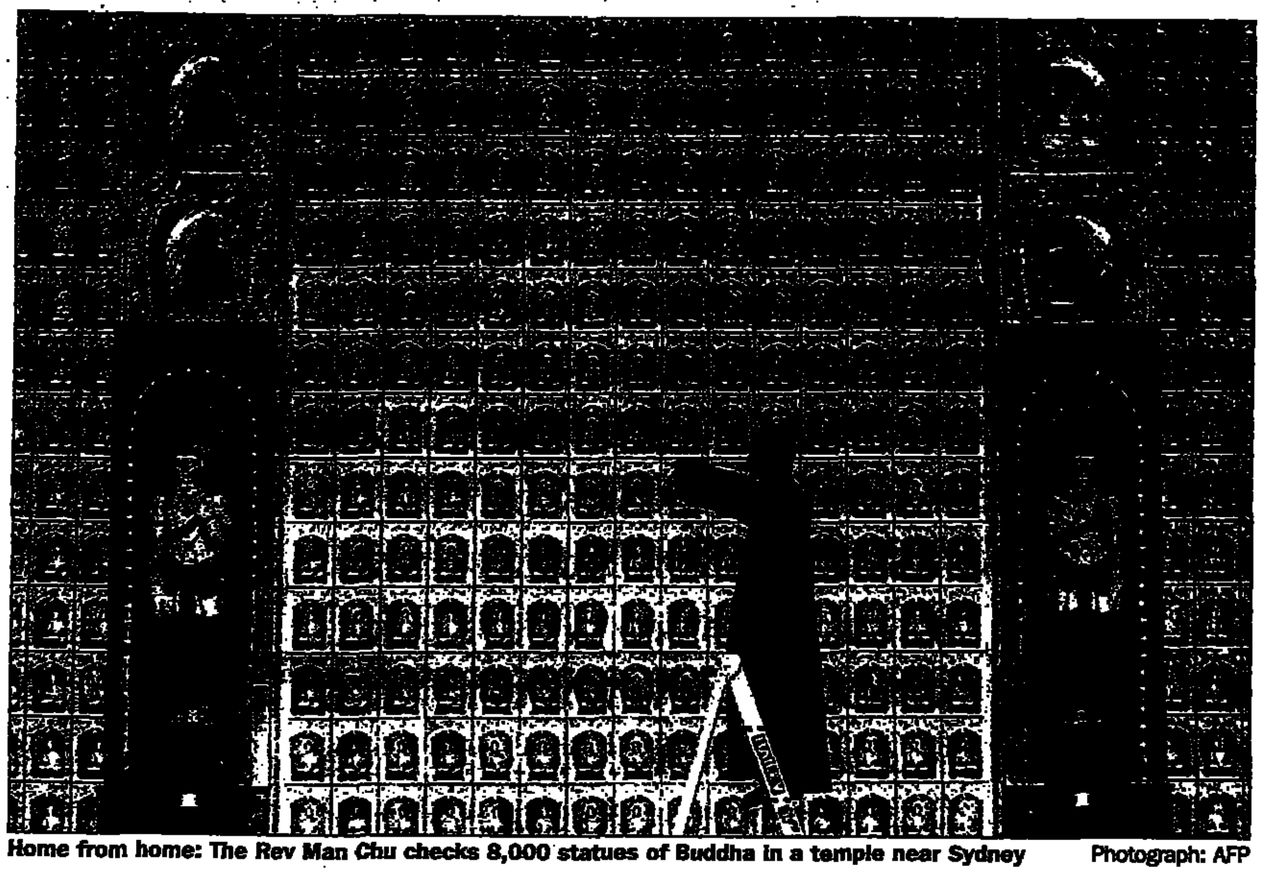
Ms Hanson told parliament: "We are in danger of being swamped by Asians ... who have their own culture and religion, form ghettoes and do not assimilate." On Aborigines, she said: "Along with millions of Australians, I am fed up to the back teeth with the inequalities that are being promoted by the government and paid for by the taxpayer under the assumption that Aboriginals are the most disadvantaged people in Australia." She called for an end to Australia's foreign aid, a review of its United Nations membership and a return of national service for 18-year-olds.

An opinion poll published on Tuesday showed that 48 per cent of respondents supported Ms Hanson's views and 38 per cent opposed them. In New South Wales, the most populous state, her support was 53 per cent. Another opinion poll revealed that 71 per cent of Australians thought immigration levels generally were too high.

At first, Mr Howard ignored Ms Hanson, telling Liberal MPs that to respond would give her opinions more significance than they deserve. But his tactic has backfired. Alarmed MPs have stepped up pressure on the prime minister to condemn Ms Hanson, claiming that her remarks have unleashed racial attacks. Gary Hardgrave, a Liberal MP from Brisbane, said that Asians had been spat on in the city's streets. Bill O'Chee, a Queensland Liberal of Chinese descent, said a woman married to an Asian man had been subjected to "frightening racial abuse". More than 100 Chinese-Australian organisations sent a joint letter to Mr Howard yesterday accusing him of tacitly supporting her views by refusing to condemn them.

Ms Hanson's remarks have been reported widely in Asia, where Australia conducts some of its most significant trade. Chris Brown, the chief executive of the Tourism Task Force, a lobby group, wrote to Mr Howard demanding that he come out strongly against Ms Hanson "for the sake of economic rationality and cultural responsibility". He said: "We cannot allow the rest of the world to think of us as 'white trash' or a nation of 'rednecks'."

In parliament on Tuesday, Mr Howard praised the "immense" contribution that Asian immigrants had made to Australia. Earlier, he described Aborigines as "the most disadvantaged of all Australians". But his remarks sat uneasily with those he had made before he became prime minister, when he referred to an "Aboriginal industry" and said he thought that levels of Asian immigration were too high. As long as Mr Howard declines to round on Ms Hanson, the MP from Ipswich is reasonably assured of continued media prominence.



Home from home: The Rev Man Chu checks 8,000 statues of Buddha in a temple near Sydney Photograph: AFP

significant shorts

Quake hits swath of the Middle East

An earthquake rocked a swath of the Middle East, swaying buildings in Cyprus and sending people running into the streets of Cairo. It was also felt across Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, western Turkey and some Greek islands. Five residents of Paphos, Cyprus, were slightly injured and a number of buildings suffered mild damage. *AP – Nicosia*

Ukraine bank short-changed

$4.3m (£1.8m) in cash disappeared from a bank and so has its director in what police said could be Ukraine's biggest bank heist. Workers at the bank in Pershotravny said seven cash bags were missing; the son of the branch director said his mother had been missing for three days. *AP – Donetsk*

Militants murder 38

Suspected Algerian Muslim militants killed 38 people in attacks seen as avenging the death of a militant leader and nine of his lieutenants. Most of the victims were killed at a a fake police roadblock set up by the rebels. *AP – Algiers*

Legal respite for former Indian PM

The former prime minister PV Narasimha Rao won temporary legal protection against arrest in a criminal forgery case. Delhi High Court Judge SK Mahajan granted Mr Rao protection against arrest until a lower court holds a hearing into the seven-year-old case on Monday. *Reuter – New Delhi*

Killings raise Korea tension

The murder of three South Korean civilians, blamed by the Defence Ministry on North Korean infiltrators, added fuel to a crisis sparked by last month's intrusion of 26 North Koreans aboard a submarine. *Reuter – Seoul*

Swiss thought for food

Zurich is split over whether to poison or to eat a swarm of American crayfish that have colonised a pond in the canton and are threatening to devour local bugs, fish and plants. The authorities want to use insecticides but residents are urging the canton to use nets, combining the goal of crayfish eradication with a culinary reward. *Reuter – Zurich*

First Chinese MP to fight ethnic corner in Wellington

DAVID BARBER,
Wellington

A wave of anti-immigrant feeling throughout New Zealand has stirred the political awakening of the country's 185,000-strong Asian community which is expected to turn out in force for Saturday's general election.

As a result, New Zealand is poised to elect its first ethnic Chinese Member of Parliament, 130 years after the first immigrant gold miners from China arrived. Pansy Wong, a 41-year-old Christchurch accountant born in Shanghai and educated in Hong Kong, is almost certain to be elected on the conservative National Party ticket.

Chinese immigrants were denied citizenship and the right to vote until the early 1950s. Since then, they have largely ignored the political process. "They always thought it was a white man's country," said Ken Yee, another National Party candidate who concedes he has only a 50-50 chance of election. Mr Yee, 43, a Canton-born lawyer, was brought to New Zealand by his immigrant parents when he was two.

One man is largely responsible for the immigrants' political awakening – Winston Peters, leader of the nationalist New Zealand First party, who earlier this year made a series of speeches on the theme: "Whose country is it anyway?"

Although he denied charges of racism, Mr Peters tapped latent xenophobia among white New Zealanders. Asian immigration has soared in recent years, with 20,851 people from Taiwan, China and Hong Kong being approved for residence in the 12 months to last June.

The government said the immigrants brought the money and skills New Zealand needs, but Mr Peters said many did not speak English, had no commitment to New Zealand and forced up house prices in Auckland, where most have settled. He called for an annual limit of 10,000 migrants, who would be admitted on probationary visas.

His speeches were blamed for an outbreak of racist attacks on Asians, and prompted the formation of the Ethnic Minority Party, led by Robert Hum, 42, an Auckland banker who migrated from Kuala Lumpur 10 years ago. He claims 120,000 members, and says he has documented 240 racist incidents. "The yellow-peril syndrome has become a paranoia here," he said. The National Party's Mr Yee had one of his election billboards defaced with the words: "Chinks eat cats."

The Asian communities, like European voters, have different electoral priorities, but one common goal – to stop Winston Peters. It may be a lost cause. While New Zealand First's popularity has slipped during the campaign, polls indicate that Mr Peters is likely to be the kingmaker – able to choose whether to join a coalition led either by the Nationals or the main opposition Labour Party.

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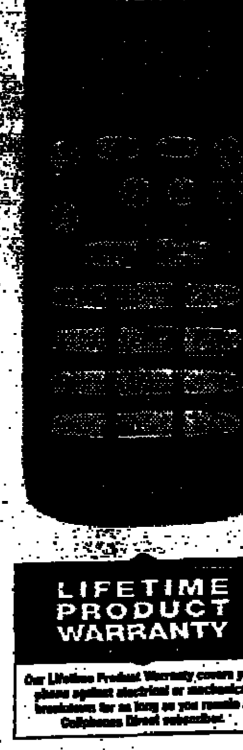

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Life mirrors soap when east meets 'EastEnders'

MOSCOW DAYS

Now I don't want to sound snobbish, but dinner parties among Britons in Moscow have changed. A year ago the agenda was clear: Boris Yeltsin's health, the warring factions in the Kremlin, the difficulties of trading in a market awash with mafiosi. All this, followed by a spot of light moaning, over the port, about how hard it still is to find everyday products, like shoe laces, in the shops.

Now you can forget it. Visitors to Moscow, be warned. Do not accept an invitation from a fellow countryman unless you can hold your end up in a lengthy debate about that most English of institutions, the popular television soap opera *EastEnders*.

And we're not talking about a vague chat. You must be the master of every detail; the attempted assasination of Ian Beale, David Wicks' adultery, Phil Mitchell's drunkenness. Call a Mitchell a Witchell, mix up a Cathy with a Cindy, and you might as well have muddled Tolstoy with Trotsky. What more would you expect from a foreign community which has spent years studying every detail of the inner workings of the Kremlin?

> Mix up a Cathy with a Cindy and you might as well have muddled Tolstoy with Trotsky

Obsession is not too strong a word. The wife of a high-flying British executive complained recently of being woken as her husband sleep-ranted about the soap's latest twist. Any unexpected development sets Moscow's telephone lines burning. Hosts have been known to time their parties to avoid clashing with the serial. "The thing is," a hopelessly addicted friend recently told me, "it is all so, so ... *Shakespearian*".

The peddler of this addiction is a Russian cable company, Kosmos TV, which pipes a package of British, American, French, Russian, German and Italian channels into the homes of those wealthy enough to afford their fees. Until recently their market, which is confined to the Moscow region, was almost entirely expatriates – diplomats, businessmen, and journalists who depended on CNN, the US network NBC, and the BBC. But in the last 10 months, it has seen a sudden rush of thousands of Russian subscribers – some 8,000, according to the company. Wealthy Russians, who have travelled to the West and want to remain in touch with the outside world, can now bring you up to date with the last airing of *The Antiques Road Show, Dad's Army, Are You Being Served*, or – unfortunately – *Noel's House Party*. If *EastEnders* were more comprehensible to non-English speakers (or non-Eastenders, if the truth be told), then no doubt it would have a large Russian following.

Certainly, the appetite is there; the Russian addiction to soap operas rivals that of the British. In fact, it is so strong that the Russian television companies – keen supporters of Boris Yeltsin – contrived to lay on extra episodes of *Santa Barbara* and the Latin American soap *Tropicana* on election day last July, in the hope that the Communist-supporting *babushki* (grandmothers) would decide to stay at home in front of the television.

In the last few months, a new programme called *Man in the Mask* has appeared on Russian screens. It delves into those areas which the country still find hard to confront. Guests appear in front of a studio audience clad in a steel mask. Last week, we saw a homosexual who explained that he could not discuss his sexual orientation on television without a disguise – a claim that is highly credible given Russia's macho culture and widespread homophobia. Before that, it was an alcoholic. The ratings are soaring.

Soon there will be more. Russia's five main channels will face rivalry from three new cable and satellite networks, which intend to bombard the 148 million population with sport, music, films, news and – of course – advertising. The largest of these, NTV Plus, is run by NTV, a private company which had a reputation for independence until the presidential election, when it used the airwaves shamelessly to support Mr Yeltsin. Another new outfit, Ren-TV, has the backing of Yuri Luzhkov, the powerful mayor of Moscow and likely contender to fill Mr Yeltsin's shoes.

None of this will make any difference to Moscow's hard core of *EastEnders* fans. Whatever is beamed down from the heavens is unlikely to break their habit. They know the two places have much in common. They both have an alcohol addiction, though Russia has the bigger problem: the sight of a dead-drunk man unconscious on the ground merits no more attention here than an upturned dustbin. (Not long ago, I watched a group of youths using a comatose drunk as a stepping stone on the pavement). Contract killers (the square's latest drama) run amok. They both have clans, family feuding, gossip. Is it too much to suggest that Albert Square could very easily be Red Square? Or have I been to too many dinners?

Phil Reeves

Afghan rebellion: Toppled regime tries to stage fightback with support of powerful neighbour

Taliban troops in the Panjshir Valley during a lull in fighting with government-backed forces. Photograph: John Moore

Ferocious mountain offensive leaves defiant Taliban bloodied

LAURENT HAMIDA
Reuter

Qalatak, Afghanistan. — Taliban officers claimed yesterday they had contained a major counter-attack in the Salang Pass, through the Hindu Kush mountains, by forces of former government military chief Ahmed Shah Masoud, after fierce fighting.

"It was hard to contain the attacks and the fighting was very serious, but we brought up heavy reinforcements and halted it. We are now in control," said Maulavi Khairulla Haqani, the Salang battlefield commander of the Islamic Taliban militia, which took Kabul on 27 September.

But his front line at Qalatak, north of the Taliban headquarters town of Jabal-os-Saraj, was 15-20km south of where it had been before the attack began on Tuesday morning.

He refused to discuss casualties or where the reinforcements had come from at his front-line post, where the road was littered with shell-casings and clearly exhausted and nervous Taliban fighters.

But western aid workers quoted witnesses in Jabal-os-Saraj as saying they had seen at least 100 dead Taliban and many more wounded being ferried from the battlefield.

"One counted 39 bodies being brought down in just an hour," one source said. They added that the assault on the Taliban was led by Basir Solangi, Massoud's commander in the Salang Pass, who withdrew north into the territory of Uzbek leader, Abdul Rashid Dostum, as the Islamic militants pressed north from Kabul.

They said the attack had forced the Taliban to suspend their so-far unsuccessful attempt to break into Massoud's Panjshir valley fortress from the town of Gulbahar, astride the narrow, winding gorge leading into it.

"There are no Taliban left in Golbahar. They've all been switched to the Salang," said one. He said the Taliban had suffered about 270 casualties – many of them to mines – since their attempt to force a way into the Panjshir began on Saturday.

> '39 bodies were brought down from the battlefield in just one hour'

Golbahar lies about 10km east of Jabal-os-Saraj, and the Panjshir valley runs north-east from there. The Salang Highway runs due north from Jabal-os-Saraj to Mazar-i-Sharif, from which Dostum controls six of Afghanistan's 33 provinces, and on to Central Asia.

The deposed Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani pleaded yesterday for negotiation, not confrontation, with the Taliban forces who drove him and his government from Kabul and now control two-thirds of the country.

Speaking to reporters just west of Mazar-i-Sharif in northern Afghanistan, Rabbani sounded almost meek by comparison to his remarks on Monday, when he vowed to take the offensive against the Taliban.

"We do not support more war. Everything possible should be achieved through negotiation," he insisted.

Mr Rabbani arrived in Mazar-i-Sharif on Tuesday for his first meeting in three years with Dostum, whose military and political support is needed to stem the Taliban tide.

Mr Rabbani said his aim was to form a broad-based and united front against the Taliban and that he had invited all factions to join him in an effort to reunify the country.

"Our first aim is restore security to the country and to stop the fighting. We are trying to create understanding and communication among all the ethnic groups," he said.

"This has been told to the Taliban too. If they don't agree, then maybe the front will have to make some military and political decisions too."

A spokesman for the ousted Afghan prime minister, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, said Mr Hekmatyar supported efforts to forge an anti-Taliban alliance between General Dostum and the former government.

But Ghairat Baheer, designated ambassador to Islamabad by Mr Rabbani, said Mr Hekmatyar was unlikely to join current talks between General Dostum and Mr Rabbani.

"Hekmatyar is busy with something else, but Rabbani can speak on behalf of the whole government," Mr Baheer said.

Forces of Mr Hekmatyar's Hezb-i-Islami party were fighting alongside those of Massoud, in the Panjshir Valley, he said.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said yesterday that the Taliban militia attacked and detained a member of the ICRC in Kabul.

A spokesman said Swiss national Jean Goude, who supervised detention issues in Kabul, was assaulted on Monday night. Several Taliban guards beat him and then took him to the foreign ministry and then to a jail. He was released on Tuesday morning.

Erika Pilhar: Charged with harming her daughter

Parents on trial for cancer treatment refusal

Wiener Neustadt, Austria (AP) — The parents of a girl whose battle with cancer filled news pages across Europe last year went on trial yesterday charged with inflicting grievous bodily harm on their daughter.

They were also charged with removing a minor from the influence of a court-appointed guardian by fleeing with their daughter, Olivia Pilhar, to Spain to avoid chemotherapy and surgery on an abdominal tumour. Erika and Helmut Pilhar pleaded not guilty to the charges. Their lawyers argued that "they pursued the way deemed appropriate for responsible parents". If convicted on both counts, the parents could be sentenced to a maximum of three-and-a-half years in prison.

In June 1995, a court removed Olivia, then six years old, from her parents' guardianship. At that time, the tumour weighed four kilograms and almost filled her abdominal cavity. Doctors estimated her chances for survival had diminished from more than 90 per cent to a mere 10 per cent.

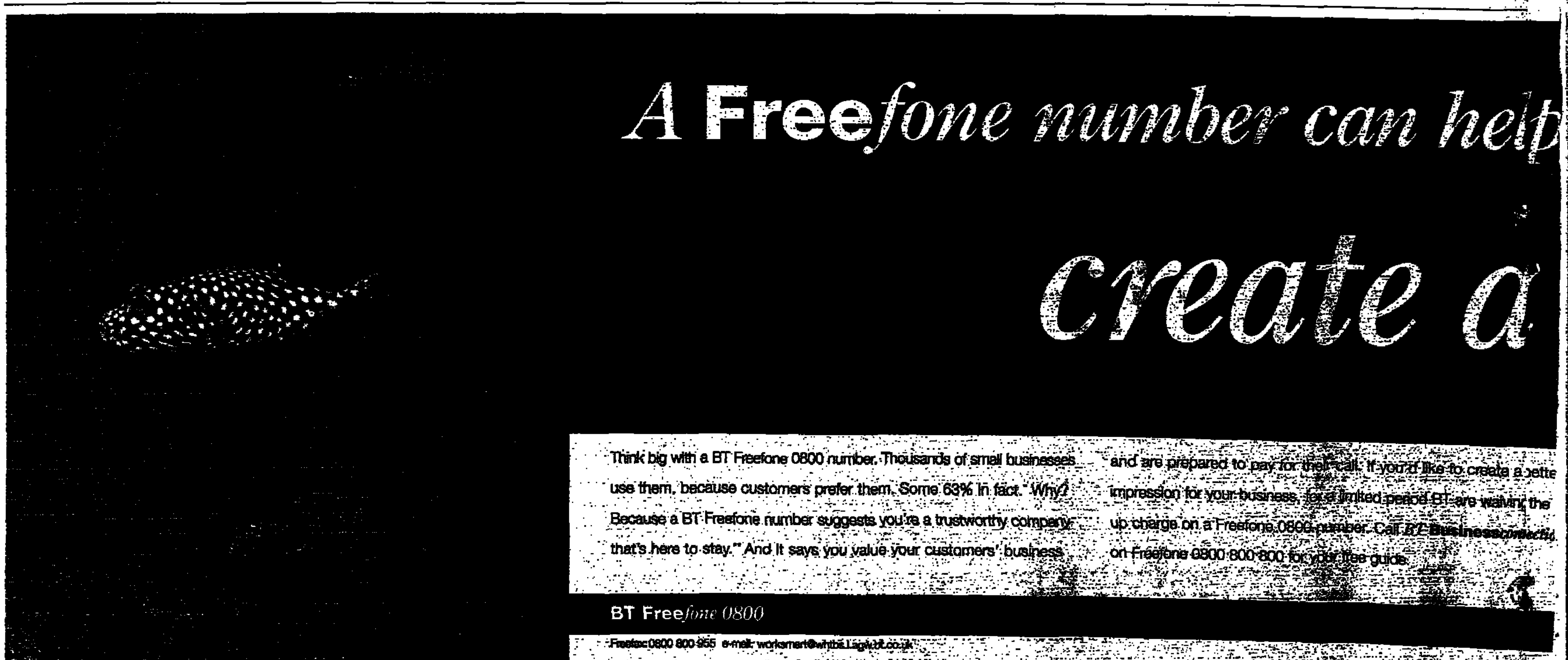
Against the will of her parents, doctors began chemotherapy to shrink the tumour. When they operated, the tumour was down to one-tenth of its former size. One kidney was disabled and was also removed.

Doctors said recently that Olivia's health had improved markedly and that she is likely to recover completely. But it would take about two years to establish with any certainty that she will survive.

The tumour was tiny when it was discovered in May 1995. But it grew rapidly as the parents refused chemotherapy on the advice of a former doctor who was opposed to conventional cancer treatments. The doctor, a German, had been stripped of his medical licence in 1986 because of his controversial views.

In court, Olivia's father detailed the family's ordeal from the time the cancer was diagnosed. He said that after many misgivings, he and his wife had decided to remove their daughter from conventional care and entrust her treatment to Geerd Ryke Hamer, the banned German doctor.

After a later court appearance by Olivia's mother, the trial is due to continue tomorrow, and a verdict is expected the same day.



*Source: Teleculture Futures. Henley Centre 1996. **Source: Telebusiness Qualitative Research. Henley Centre 1994.

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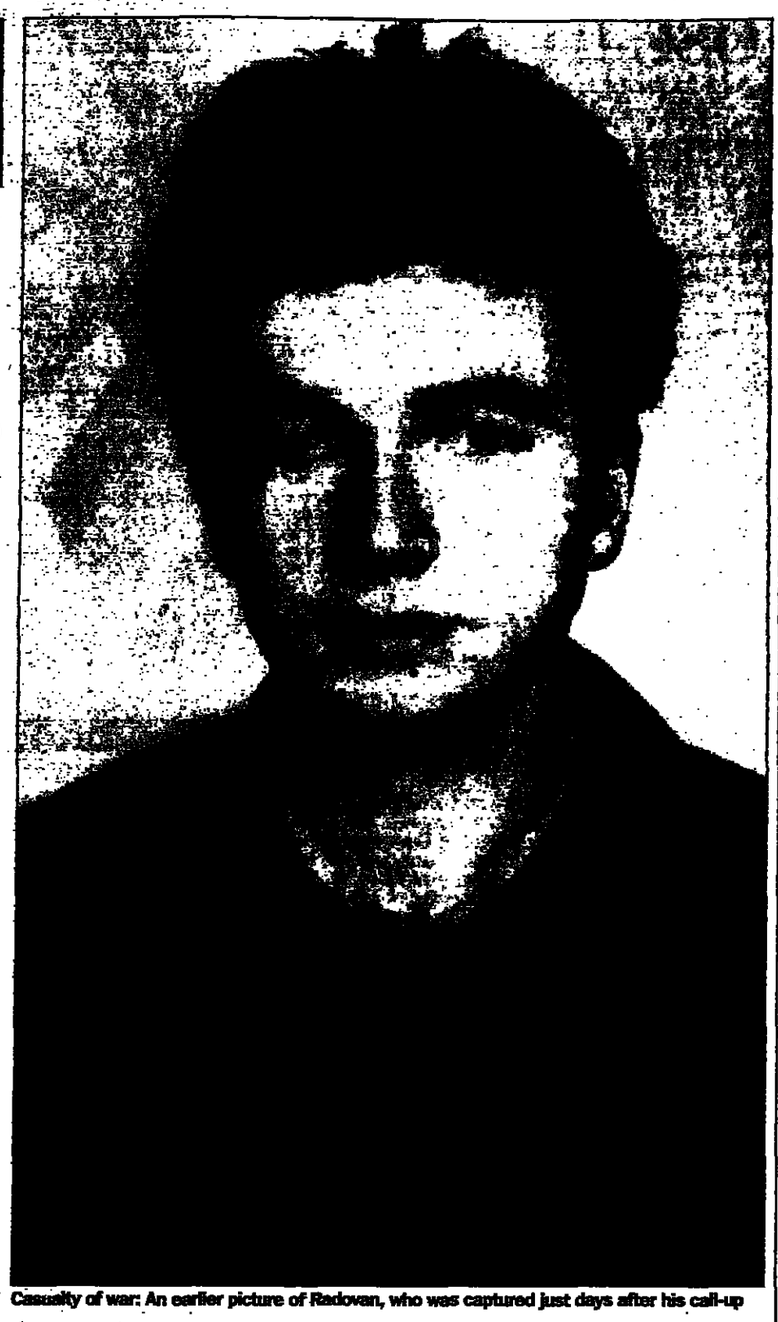
BACK TO BOSNIA

The painful search for reminders of Radovan



Casualty of war: An earlier picture of Radovan, who was captured just days after his call-up

Sanski Most — Radojka Todorovic had told us that she and her husband had fled from their home at 14A Braca Jugovic street, that the Muslims who now lived there were kind, and that her missing son's photograph still lay in the house.

Her tears made it impossible to refuse her plea to retrieve it. But the Muslims who captured the town almost a year ago had renamed some of the roads; and many of those same Muslims had been driven from the very area in which the Serb Todorovic family now lived, in the "cleansed" farmland of north-western Bosnia. Their hearts would not be warmed by my story of Radojka Todorovic's grief as she tried to identify the remains of her only son in Banja Luka's warehouse of death.

Sanski Most was a shared town in the pre-war days of old Yugoslavia, and it did not take long to find a policeman who remembered the old Braca Jugovic street; turn right after the bridge, Radojka Todorovic had told us, and you'll find the house after 800 metres, a single-storey villa with an outhouse at the back, the upper floor reached by a wooden staircase.

The Muslim policeman mentioned the bridge and number 14A stood as Radojka described it, white-walled beside a garden of fruit trees with a bench below the outhouse stairs. Mustafa Mahic was sitting on the bench and he wasn't happy.

"Todorovic? Todorovic?" he asked, frowning and looking at his son. "They were some of the worst of the Serb war criminals, we know the name well." A common name, I mumbled, as he knew well. Of course, the Todorovic family was large, but Radojka and her husband, Nicola, and their missing son were not war criminals.

I described, as the two men listened to me in a cold silence, how I had watched the couple trying to identify the heap of bones and flesh in Banja Luka's awful makeshift mortuary the previous day, how their only son Radovan had been a student until forced to join up on 21 August last year, only to disappear at the front 18 days' later.

I had seen his student papers and military documents, I said. He had never been a criminal. There was a young daughter, Visnja. The mother wanted only the family papers and photographs, along with a snapshot of Radovan taken four months before he left home for the last time, celebrating his graduation, along with his girlfriend.

"Who killed him?" Mustafa Mahic asked. The Croats, I said truthfully, and the hardness in his face softened as if he had suddenly grown older than his 71 years. He pointed at his chest. "I was in the Manjaca camp," he said. "So was my son." I had feared this. Like most of the survivors of the Serb ethnic "cleansing" of Prijedor and Kozarac, he had been sent to one of three camps, the least terrible but murderous, none the less.

I had visited Manjaca myself in 1992 and seen the wraith-like prisoners, forced to wear military clothes, kicked and beaten when visitors were not present, occasionally bludgeoned to death. "I don't know how I survived," Mustafa Mahic said. "What is Kozarac like now?" he asked.

It was pointless to lie. I had just driven up into his village on the other side of the old front line, to look at the wreckage of the 1992 Serb assault on the Muslims of north-west Bosnia. Every home had gone, I said. Torched, gutted, the farmlands overgrown, the roads broken.

Mahic nodded. "I know," he said. It had been a test. Then his son motioned to the staircase that led to the upper floor of the outhouse: "The only things we found here were up there."

In the attic of the building lay a pile of papers. They were pathetic; copies of dust-covered women's magazines, a history of Marxist ideology in cyrillic script, a 1991 newspaper, a child's geometry and algebra book. Beneath them, I found a framed photograph of a little girl sitting in a school classroom, smiling shyly at the camera as she sat on a bench in a pink dress. Beside it was a heap of exercise books, each clearly entitled in biro: "Visnja Todorovic." But there was no photograph of Radovan.

"That's all there was but you're welcome to look some more," Mustafa Mahic said. We rummaged under heaps of wood and old blankets and pruning books, but there was nothing more. I gathered up the school papers and the picture of the schoolgirl Visnja and her exercise books. I thanked the man and his son and told them they had been kind.

"We are kind people," the old man said and stroked his chin. "I was a Partisan in the war and fought all over eastern Bosnia for the liberation of my country from the Germans. Then in 1992, I was rewarded by being thrown from my home and more than 40 members of my family were slaughtered like animals by the Serbs. Maybe now the Todorovic family would like to swap their property officially with mine."

It was a familiar suggestion in Sanski Most, the careful, painful legalising of "ethnic cleansing", the Serbs and the Muslims swapping property papers to recognise their new refugee homes as their own. I didn't volunteer to take this message to the Todorovic family. Then Mustafa Mahic added suddenly: "It's a strange thing – we are made in the image of God and yet we want so much to destroy each other."

I thanked him again and drove back to the Serb city of Banja Luka, past the young British soldiers and their three tanks on the old front line. It took just over an hour to return and call the Todorovic family on the phone. A cousin answered. She did not care that I had not found the picture of Radovan. Anything from the old home would be dear to Radojka and her husband, she said, translating for the couple at the other end of the phone line.

Yes, Radojka wanted all the papers and the photograph of Visnja, she went on. "Radojka wanted anything from her old home," she added. "I have told her what you have brought and now she is crying."

Parents' anguish: Radojka and Nicola Todorovic trying to identify their son's remains

> 'In the attic lay a pathetic pile of papers, dust-covered magazines, and a heap of school exercise books, but no photograph'

Canada loses top officer to ghosts of Somali past

Second chief of staff forced to resign as scandal rumbles on

HUGH WINSOR
Ottawa

It was more than three years ago that trigger-happy members of the Canadian Airborne Regiment, based in northern Somalia as part of a UN peace-keeping mission, shot and killed one Somali looter and tortured another to death. But the reverberations of those shots are still shaking up the government of Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, claiming the head of the Canadian Armed Forces chief of staff this week.

General Jean Boyle, formerly an air force fighter pilot, was relieved of his command on Tuesday, the second chief of staff whose military career has been terminated by the Somalia scandal.

There is much more at stake than pinning the blame for actions on a small rogue element within the now-disbanded Canadian Airborne Regiment, during an unsavoury assignment. The Canadian forces' experience in Belet Huen has become the thread that is unravelling one of the sources of Canadian national pride and a cornerstone of Canadian foreign policy – its widely-respected participation in UN peace-keeping. A former Canadian prime minister, the late Lester Pearson, won a Nobel Peace Prize for his role in establishing the first UN-sponsored peace-keeping force, following the 1956 invasion of the Suez Canal zone.

Canadian soldiers, airmen and naval officers have been sought out for their reputed impartiality and technical competence, often providing the communications and logistical support for UN missions throughout the Middle East, Africa and now Haiti. So much so that the UN blue beret is now an important Canadian symbol.

Six soldiers, including two officers have been charged and convicted for their varying degrees of responsibility for the torture and death of a Somali teenager while in custody, but the inquiries prompted by that murder and the other shootings has revealed widespread malaise within the Canadian army.

It was subsequently revealed that senior officers knew the Airborne regiment had serious discipline problems before it was sent to Somalia and that there were several instances of racist behaviour. Some members had boasted that they were going to Somalia "to shoot niggers". The chief of staff in charge at the time of the Somalia deployment was forced out and General John de Chastelain, who had retired and been made Canadian ambassador to Washington was called back to resume the position of chief of staff with a mandate to clean the house. But he retired again last January and was replaced by General Boyle, who apparently had no connection with the Somalia affair.

That turned out not to be the case, as the Somalia inquiries probed deeper. It turned out that General Boyle, who was in National Defence Headquarters at the time of the Somalia incidents and responsible for communications policy, had been part of an effort to prevent the media from obtaining information about the incidents.

Documents that ought to have been made accessible to the public were shredded or altered. Although he came under heavy criticism, General Boyle clung to his job because David Collinette, who had been the Minister of National Defence since the Liberals took power in 1993, consistently supported him.

Impact: Jean Chrétien has been shaken by the Somali atrocities

Mr Collinette was forced to resign from the government last Friday on an unrelated matter. He had signed a letter to the Immigration and Refugee Board, a quasi-judicial body, on behalf of a constituent, which is contrary to the ethical guidelines that apply to ministers of the Crown.

Without a protector, General Boyle's own fate was thus sealed, especially since the new defence minister, Douglas Young, subsequently refused to give him a vote of confidence after a long meeting on Monday.

The next day, General Boyle delivered his ceremonial sword and letter of resignation to Mr Chrétien's office and they were accepted.

From Big Bang to city scandal. 10 years of *Independent* business. Pages 22-23.

obituaries / gazette

Lord Roskill

Eustace Roskill was equipped with a formidable intellect, an astonishing memory and a great gift for inspiring affection and friendship. He could deliver accurately and persuasively a complicated judgment, orally and extempore. He could entertain with brilliant conversation and anecdotes delivered with charm and without malice.

He was born in 1911, the youngest of four sons. His brothers became respectively Chairman of the Monopolies Commission, a famous naval historian, and a distinguished industrial consultant. Eustace was an Exhibitioner at Winchester College and an Exhibitioner at Exeter College, Oxford, where he took First Class honours in Modern History. He was elected to a Harmsworth scholarship and called to the Bar by the Middle Temple. He was a pupil of Johnny Pritt and Henry Willinck and practised as a junior at the Commercial Bar.

To give a bare recital of his subsequent major achievements, he took silk in 1953, became Chairman of Hampshire Quarter Sessions in 1960, and was appointed a Judge of the High Court, Queen's Bench Division in 1962. In 1967 he became the first Vice-Chairman of the Parole Board, and the following year was appointed Chairman of the Third London Airport Commission which reported in 1970. In 1971 he was promoted to the Court of Appeal and in 1980 elevated to the House of Lords as a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary and sat on the Appellate Committee and in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council until his retirement in 1986. He was Chairman of the Fraud Trials Committee which reported in 1986. After his retirement he was Chairman of the Appeals Committee of the Take-over Panel between 1987 and 1993. Until shortly before his death he was much in demand as an arbitrator in commercial disputes at home and abroad.

This recital does not, however, do justice to Eustace Roskill's complex character and humanity. He was the son of a KC, a strict and much-loved father who inculcated in his children the virtues of hard work and public service and the principles of Christianity. Eustace was greatly attached to his mother and greatly shocked by her death in a fire at the family home. In the 1930s he suffered from tuberculosis; as a result he was unfit for active service and spent the war years in the Ministries of Shipping and War Transport, working with Sir William McNair on questions of international law to avoid the threat of vessels being impounded by hostile nations.

As a junior in commercial chambers before the war, work was hard to come by and money short, but after the war Roskill acquired a large commercial practice by hard work, attention to detail, speed and decisiveness. His clients appreciated his mastery of the law, his analyses of the facts, the application of principle and practical advice. He encouraged young brilliant entrants to the profession including John Donaldson, subsequently Master of the Rolls, and Michael Mustill, now a Lord of Appeal.

When he joined the Commercial Bar the range of work was largely limited to the traditional subjects of carriage by sea, insurance, banking transactions and the supervision of arbitrators. His initiative and energy at the Bar and subsequently on the Bench began the process (carried forward by his contemporaries and successors) of transforming the scale and variety of the Commercial Bar's work and the accessibility and speed of response of the Commercial Court.

Roskill extended his practice to crime and personal injuries in becoming Vice Chairman and later Chairman of Hampshire Quarter Sessions. When he took silk he argued a number of civil cases of great importance with skill and success. His promotion to the Bench in 1962 as a judge of the Queen's Bench Division was expected and welcomed.

As a judge, Roskill was appreciated for the qualities which had brought him success at the Bar. In court he was patient and courteous. He was respected for high principles and admired for his common sense. He was strict in the punishment of crimes of violence but understanding and compassionate toward those who did not constitute a menace to society.

Roskill organised the first of a series of sentencing conferences for magistrates, and is still remembered by the magistracy for his leadership and guidance and friendly advice which produced fairness and consistency in the administration of the criminal law. At the Parole Board and with his fellow judge Arthur James he was largely responsible for rules of practice and procedure which established the reputation of the Board for fairness and consistency.

Roskill's success as a judge led to his being presented with the poisoned chalice of chairmanship of the commission which was instructed to choose between possible sites for the Third London Airport. Its report is still studied in academic circles as a model example of cost benefit analysis. Roskill's conduct of the work was impeccable. With one dissentient the commission agreed on the best site, at Cublington in Bedfordshire. If the recommendation had been accepted a good deal of anguish for travellers would have been saved; it was however hotly opposed by local interests; Roskill was unfairly abused and carried that abuse with equanimity although it must have hurt. He stoically declined to answer back and allowed the report of the commission to speak for itself.

He later suffered bad publicity and abuse when a soldier convicted of rape was freed by a division of the Court of Appeal over which he presided. This was ironic, because Roskill was always strict in his approach to crimes of this nature; but the court took the view that much harm and no good would result from a prison sentence, that the pronouncement of the original sentence of three years was a sufficient deterrent and that the prisoner would become a useful member of society if he were released and thus enabled to be taken back into the Army.

In addition to his work at the Bar and on the Bench Roskill devoted much time and skill to help those institutions which had won his loyalty. He became a fellow of Winchester College, an honorary fellow of his college at Oxford and enjoyed meeting the dons and the young undergraduates with whom he was at ease.

When Lord Pearce's Committee recommended a reorganisation of the relationship between the Bar and the Inns of Court, Roskill consented to become the first President of the Senate of the Inns of Court and the Bar and it was largely due to his tact and energy that the reorganisation succeeded.

Throughout his career, Roskill took an active part in the affairs of the Middle Temple. Before, during and after becoming Treasurer of the Inn – at the same time as his brother Ashton was Treasurer of the Inner Temple – he was available to advise and encourage students and young barristers.

Accessibility was the keynote of Roskill's personality on and off the bench. He was often to be found between his flat in the Middle Temple and the Law Courts carrying on a wide-ranging and uninhibited conversation. The same lack of pomposity and grandeur marked his activities with the young as with their seniors. He set high standards for the Bar and could bear heavily on those who performed badly, but his solicitude for those he felt would benefit from support and encouragement helped launch many a successful career. When personal tragedy struck any friend, tactful help and sympathy were inevitably forthcoming from Roskill and his wife Elisabeth.

After his retirement Roskill was a popular choice as Chairman of the Take-over Appeal committee and as an arbitrator. His last and perhaps greatest contribution to the improvement of the administration of justice is to be found in the report of the Fraud Trials Committee which he chaired. The recommendations with regard to jury trial were not well received in some quarters but time has proved that, as Roskill with his vast experience believed, justice is not best served by imposing excessive burdens of time and complication on juries. The committee's recommendations with regard to other matters such as pre-trial conferences and pre-trial disclosure brought a breath of fresh air on to the scene and have been accepted and largely adopted.

In his last years Roskill fought bravely against ill-health, sustained as always by his family. He retained his interest in literature, music and art and attended a performance of a favourite opera not long before he died. No account of the career of Eustace Roskill would be complete without an acknowledgement of the debt he owed to his wife Elisabeth. They were together for nearly 50 years, they adored one another, they supplemented and complemented one another and Roskill would not have accomplished so much without her.

Sydney Templeman

Eustace Wentworth Roskill, judge: born London 6 February 1911; called to the Bar, Middle Temple 1933; QC 1953; Kt 1962; Judge of the High Court of Justice, Queen's Bench Division 1962-71; Chairman, Commission on Third London Airport 1968-70; PC 1971; a Lord Justice of Appeal 1971-80; created 1980 Baron Roskill; a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary 1980-86; married 1947 Elisabeth Jackson (one son, two daughters); died Reading, Berkshire 3 October 1996.

Roskill: courteous, compassionate, but strict on crimes of violence

Professor Thomas ap Rees

Thomas ap Rees, Professor of Botany and Head of Plant Sciences at Cambridge, was killed on 3 October cycling the six or so miles home from work – something he did almost every night of his life in Cambridge.

His contribution to the field of plant biochemistry was substantial. Since his first publication in 1959, he produced over 100 research papers and more than 20 reviews. As Head of Plant Sciences he continued to maintain an active research group, training graduate students and producing a steady flow of research publications.

Soon after coming to Cambridge in 1965, he collaborated with members of the Biochemistry, Genetics and Zoology Departments to design and establish an important new course for first-year students which became known as Biology of Cells. This development was of enormous significance for science education at Cambridge and has been used since as a model for inter-disciplinary courses throughout the country. A whole generation of Cambridge chemists and physicists was enticed into careers in molecular and cellular biology after receiving from Tom ap Rees their first instruction in the mysteries of life.

He was born in 1930 and attended Llandovery College, Dyfed. In 1951, after two years' military service in the Royal Corps of Signals, he went up to Lincoln College, Oxford, where he was awarded an Upper Second in Botany. He stayed in Oxford for his DPhil, working with Dr J.L. Hartley in the Botany Department. Eighteen months' post-doctoral work at Purdue University in Indiana was followed by an antipodean migration to take up a lectureship in the Botany Department at the University of Sydney.

In 1961, still in Sydney, he moved on to the Plant Physiology Unit of CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) where he became a Senior Research Officer. His globe-trotting ended in 1964 when he returned to Britain to become a lecturer in the Botany Department at Cambridge University. In 1991 he was promoted to Reader, but never took up the post as it was overtaken by his election to the Chair of Botany.

In the wider scientific community he was a member of the Science and Engineering Board of the BBSRC (Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council) and a formidable Chairman of the Plant and Microbial Sciences Board.

Ap Rees's commitment to education was absolute. He was an authoritative lecturer and a firm believer in the importance of practical work in the education of a scientist. Among his students he commanded respect and admiration through his natural authority and the excellence of his teaching. He became a Fellow and College Lecturer in Gonville and Caius College in 1965 and remained a dominant influence in the teaching of biology at Caius until he took up the Chair of Botany in 1991. In 1983 he was awarded the ScD from Cambridge University in recognition of his achievements in research. Between 1986 and 1991 he was a formidable Director of Studies in Biology, once describing his duties as "encouraging the faint-hearted and putting the fear of God into the idle".

Tom ap Rees was not your "typical" don: though he lunched in college almost daily he rarely dined or attended official College Feasts. But he never missed a Matriculation or Graduation Dinner, or other function at which students were entertained. He had precious gifts of gentle humour and the ability to instill self-confidence into his neighbours, whoever they were.

He had prodigious energy and led strictly by example: as Head of Department he gave his full share of lectures – and sat on more than his fair share of committees. He maintained an active group of graduate students and thus he could (and did) respond to grumbles about workloads with a robust "when you are doing as many lectures and sitting on as many committees as I am then you can complain". He summarised his management philosophy as a desire to create a sense of unity and "to be as much use to people as I can".

This policy governed his day-to-day approach to university life: he could always find time to help, whether you were a junior undergraduate or a senior member of staff. (Or even a historian colleague with a gardening problem.) The mystery was how he combined this open-door policy with getting so much done; in part he achieved it by being satisfied with the broad over-view: sometimes the details needed further attention, but the result was generally right.

To a certain extent, ap Rees kept his professional and personal life separate, though he took piles of work home and frequently entertained students there. Lunch, with his wife Wendy, started with a tour of the fine garden, and continued in a gallery of photographs of mountains. Gardens and mountains were the passions of his private life, his copious knowledge about them contributed to a grand view of all things natural.

His enthusiasm for gardens was useful when he was the acting Director of the Cambridge Botanic Garden (1995-96). He was also a proud son of Wales, a rugby enthusiast who somehow remained an optimist, and maintained close links with the Principality thoughout his life.

This rich mix of talents and interests was often concealed by his natural modesty. One of us came back in the spring of this year from Gregynog in central Wales, enthusing about the beauty of the gardens, but surprised that the season was 2-3 weeks behind cold Cambridge. "That's because it's 692 feet above sea-level" was the reply: it turned out that for years ap Rees had been informally advising the gardens' Warden.

David Summers, Ed Tanner and **Tony Kirby**

Ap Rees: not your 'typical' don

Thomas ap Rees, botanist and plant scientist: born Frome, Somerset 19 October 1930; Lecturer in Botany, Cambridge University 1964-91; Fellow, Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge 1965-91, Professor of Botany and Head of Department of Plant Sciences 1991-96; married 1955 Wendy Holroyde (three sons); died near Cambridge 3 October 1996.

Sir Nigel Fisher

Nigel Fisher was one of the most disarming and agreeable of men: yet he possessed political convictions of steel, and a stubborn will to match. Harold Macmillan was a hero to him (he published a biography of him in 1982), but he was totally lacking in Macmillan's subtlety and deviousness. In short, he lacked all of the supposed characteristics of the successful politician, except charm: and this, perhaps, is why he never held more than junior office.

Iain Macleod, of whom Fisher also wrote a biography (in 1973; a much better piece of work than his *Harold Macmillan*), was also a hero, but also a very close friend. Indeed, Macleod was, in one of the most romantic episodes in modern political history, instrumental in saving Fisher's political career.

Fisher, like Macleod, was an ardent believer in the Commonwealth. He worked tirelessly for the independence of Commonwealth nations (especially African ones, and above all Uganda). He was not a latter-day imperialist, like the then Marquess of Salisbury, but one of a once influential branch of the Conservative Party which has now dwindled to almost nothing: these were men and women who believed that the Commonwealth offered a way of proceeding down a hopeful path to a bright future of international and interracial co-operation, of brotherly love. He was intensely, and increasingly, uneasy about the steadily tightening restrictions on immigration from the Commonwealth put forward by governments of both parties.

Fisher: elfin humour

His constituents in Surbiton, however, took a view diametrically opposed to that of their Member, and serious moves were undertaken to deselect him: he told his wife and various friends in the press (including myself) that his political career was over.

Then a letter arrived from Macleod, the Shadow Chancellor. It was short and abrupt, and read, "Dear Nigel. I have told Ted that, if you go, I go too." Fisher was immediately on the telephone, explaining to Macleod that the departure of the Shadow Chancellor would put in peril all his arduous work in framing a new Conservative economic policy. It was to no avail: Macleod was adamant. However, the party leader, Edward Heath – who cared little for Fisher – had no intention of losing Macleod. The whole weight of Conservative Central Office was brought to bear on the rebels of the Surbiton Conservative Association, and Fisher survived as an MP until his retirement in 1983.

Nigel Fisher was born in 1913, the son of a commander in the Royal Navy who was knighted for his work as an attaché during the First World War (and who then stood as a Liberal candidate in the 1924 election). The martial theme was to persist throughout the son's life, for both his wives were the daughters of soldiers, and he himself was to win distinction in the Second World War. He went to school at Eton, and to university at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was judged to be a good, if not outstanding, student. In 1935 he married the daughter of the seventh Earl of Lisburne, and thus began a passionate involvement (on the Unionist side) in Northern Irish politics which survived even after his marriage was dissolved in 1952 (his son by that marriage is Mark Fisher, the Labour MP). This involvement was encouraged by the fact that his second wife, Patricia Smiles (whom he married in 1956), was also an Ulsterwoman, and, indeed, a Westminster MP, in the Ulster Unionist interest, from 1953 to 1956.

In 1939 Fisher enlisted in the Welsh Guards, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He rose to the rank of captain in 1940, and ended his military career as a major. He fought in the Hook of Holland and in Boulogne in 1940, and was mentioned in dispatches. In 1945 he was part of the Allied invasion of Western Europe, was wounded, and was awarded the Military Cross.

Like so many servicemen of his generation, he was determined to enter politics once the war was over. He fought a hopeless fight in the 1945 general election, but won Hitchin in 1950. He transferred to Surbiton in 1955, and continued when it became Kingston-upon-Thames and Surbiton in 1974. For all that his liberal views on national affairs excited hostility in the constituency, he was an assiduous and well-liked Member, though his heart lay elsewhere than within the narrow boundaries of the community he represented.

He threw all his energies into the Conservative Party itself, and served two terms on its National Executive (1945-47 and 1973-83). Those who did not like him thought him arrogant: Reginald Maudling once described him as "a jumped up little sod". It is certain that he had no small opinion of his own abilities, and that he thought that he deserved a major role on the national stage. But I, who differed from him on pretty well everything except his admiration for Iain Macleod, never found him arrogant, nor unwilling to engage in civilised debate from those whose views differed from his own. He could be prickly, certainly, but a great deal less so than many of his colleagues.

Though he served on a parliamentary delegation to Scandinavia in 1950, his attention was really focused on Africa and the West Indies, with a passing concern for Canada. He took part in countless Commonwealth Parliamentary Association missions to, and deputations for the interests of, Commonwealth countries.

Having served as Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Minister of Food and the Home Secretary, he became Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office in 1962 and, when it was merged into the Commonwealth Office the following year, he went along too; and he continued his duties in opposition after the general election defeat of 1964.

It took Fisher a long time to accept the fact that ministerial preferment was not again going to come his way. His only chance, probably, would have been to advance under the protection and patronage of Macleod, but Macleod died within days of the Conservative victory in the general election of 1970, the only Chancellor since Lord Randolph Churchill never to deliver a Budget speech.

Nigel Fisher was a man of the highest principles, blessed with elfin humour and a warm heart. If he never achieved the glittering prizes he thought were rightfully his, he did achieve goodness.

Patrick Cosgrave

Nigel Thomas Loveridge Fisher, politician: born London 14 July 1913; MC 1945; MP (Conservative) for Herts, Hitchin 1950-55, Surbiton 1955-74, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surbiton 1974-83; PPS to the Minister of Food 1951-54, to the Home Secretary 1954-57; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies 1962-63, for Commonwealth Relations and for the Colonies 1963-64; opposition spokesman for Commonwealth affairs 1964-66; Kt 1974; married 1935 Lady Gloria Vaughan (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1952), 1956 Patricia Smiles (died 1995); died Chilton, Buckinghamshire 9 October 1996.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

TEARE: On 22 September 1996, to Karen (née Bull) and Philip, a son, Cosmo Richard.

DEATHS

BANDINI: Luigi, suddenly on 7 October, much-loved husband, father and brother. Family funeral to take place in Italy. Memorial service will be announced.

DIXON: On 8 October 1996, G. Joly Dixon MD FRCP aged 87, of Eye, Glasgow and Dublin, much-loved father and grandfather, peacefully in Tucson, Arizona, where a memorial will be held.

READER HARRIS: Dame Diana, on 7 October 1996, peacefully at home in Salisbury, aged 83 years. Dearly loved by her family Sue, June, Joanna, Christopher, Michael, Sarah and their families and her many friends world wide. Funeral service at Salisbury Cathedral at 12 noon on Thursday 17 October 1996. All are welcome. Followed by a private cremation later. A memorial service will be held in Sherborne Abbey at a date to be announced. Family flowers only, donations for Church Missionary Society and/or Christian Aid, c/o I.N. Newman Ltd, Griffin House, 55 Winchester Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP1 1HL.

For Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS, write to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, or telephone to 0171-293 2011 (fax 0171-293 2010). Charges are £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Birthdays

Mr Lance Cairns, cricketer, 47; Sir John Cassels, former Director-General, National Economic Development Office, 68; Mr Winston S. Churchill MP, 56; Mr Charles Dance, actor, 50; Miss Laura Davies, golfer, 33; Mrs Karlene Davis, Deputy General Secretary, Royal College of Midwives, 50; Mr Ted Edgar, show jumper, 61; Miss Fiona Fullerton, actress, 40; The Right Rev Alastair Haggart, former Bishop of Edinburgh, 81; Sir Peter Kemp, former civil servant, 62; Lord Kincraig, former senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 78; Professor John Large, acoustics engineer, 66; Mr Daniel Massey, actor, 63; Professor Howard Newby, Vice-Chancellor, Southampton University, 49; Mr Nicholas Parsons, quizmaster on radio and television, 68; The Right Rev Kenneth Pillar, former Suffragan Bishop of Hertford, 72; Mr Harold Pinter, playwright, 66; Professor Brian Smith, Principal, University of Wales, College of Cardiff, 63; The Earl of Stockton, publisher, 53; Mr Chris Tarrant, broadcaster, 50; Mr Frank H. Taylor, former MP and chartered accountant, 89; Mr Richard Thornton, Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey, 74; Mr Midge Ure, rock singer, 43; Mr Ben Vereen, actor, 50; Mr Willard White, baritone, 50.

Anniversaries

Births: Jean-Antoine Watteau, painter, 1684; Johann Ludwig Krebs, composer, 1713; Henry Cavendish, physicist and chemist, 1731; Benjamin West, painter, 1738; Hugh Miller, geologist and writer, 1802; Giuseppe Fortunio Francesco Verdi, composer, 1813; Sir John Simon, public health pioneer, 1816; Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, farmer and statesman, 1825; Fridtjof Nansen, explorer and statesman, 1861; Helen Hayes (Helen Hayes Brown), stage and screen actress, 1900; Alberto Giacometti, sculptor, 1901; Thelonious Sphere Monk, pianist and pioneer of "bop", 1918. **Deaths:** Fra Filippo Lippi, painter, 1469; Edith Piaf (Edith Giovanna Gassion), singer, 1963; Sir Ralph David Richardson, actor, 1983; Yul Brynner (Youl Bryner), film actor, 1985; George Orson Welles, actor and producer, 1985; Priaulx Rainier, composer, 1986. **On this day:** the population of Tristan da Cunha was evacuated from the island, following a volcanic eruption, 1961; Fiji became independent, 1970; Sir John Betjeman became Poet Laureate, 1972; after being fined $10,000 for income tax evasion, Spiro Agnew resigned as US Vice-President, 1973; in the General Election, Labour was returned with an overall majority of three, 1974. **Today** is the Feast Day of St Cerbonius, St Daniel, Saints Eulampius and Eulampia, St Francis Borgia, St Gereon, St Maharsapor and St Paulinus of York.

Lectures

British Museum: Carol Michaelson, "Imperial China: Qin and Han", 11.30am.

Victoria and Albert Museum: Paul Harrison, "Textiles of the Great Exhibition", 2.30pm.

Royal Society (Zeneca Lecture): Professor Robert Young, "New Materials: fact or fantasy?", 5.30pm.

London School of Economics (Clifford Barclay Enterprise Lecture): Professor John Kay, "The Stakeholder Society: 'What is its True Meaning' ", 5.30pm.

United Medical and Dental Schools

Dr Malcolm Godfrey, Chairman of the Council of Governors of the United Medical and Dental Schools of Guy's and St Thomas's Hospitals, presided yesterday at a ceremony in Southwark Cathedral, to award UMDS Honorary Fellowships. The Fellowships were awarded to Mr Donald Bompas, Professor Walter Holland, Mr Peter Lunsden, Dr Richard Ross, Professor Jack Tilley and Mr Victor Warren. A reception was held in the Glaziers' Hall followed by a dinner in the Governors' Hall at St Thomas' Hospital.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, unveils a Memorial at Westminster Abbey, London SW1, commemorating the innocent victims of the century. The Duke of Edinburgh, President and Honorary Life Fellow of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, presents the 1996 Albert Medal and attends a dinner at 8 John Adam Street, London WC2. Princess Margaret presides at the Annual Council Meeting of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children at the Harbour Centre, London EC2. Princess Alexandra opens Phase II of the Woking Community Hospital, Heathside Road, Woking, Surrey. The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, Royal Asthma Campaign, attends the 1996 Asthma Gift Fair at the Harlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6, and as Patron, National Missing Persons Helpline, attends a Service of Thanksgiving and Hope at St Bride's, Fleet Street, and subsequently attends a Reception in St Bride's Institute, London EC4.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Planning refusal for gypsy caravans upheld

Buckley v United Kingdom (23/1995/529/615); European Court of Human Rights; 26 September 1996

LAW REPORT

10 October 1996

The refusal of planning permission to enable a gypsy to live in caravans stationed on her own land did not constitute unjustified interference with her right, under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, to respect for her home.

The European Court of Human Rights unanimously held that article 8 applied to the case of the applicant, June Buckley, but ruled by a a majority of six votes to three that there had been no violation of that article.

Article 8 provided:

1. Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.
2. There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society . . .

Mrs Buckley lived with her three children in caravans parked on land owned by her off Meadow Drove, Willingham, south Cambridgeshire. Her family had for many generations lived as gypsies in the south Cambridgeshire area. She had lived in caravans all her life.

In 1988 she acquired a plot of land on to which she moved three caravans. In 1989 she applied retrospectively to South Cambridgeshire District Council for planning permission. This was refused and the council issued an enforcement notice requiring her caravans to be removed. An appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment was dismissed in April 1991.

She was subsequently prosecuted and fined for failure to comply with the enforcement notice. A further application for planning permission, made in September 1994, was also refused and a further appeal to the secretary of state dismissed.

Mrs Buckley contended that she was prevented from living with her family in caravans on her own land and from following the traditional life-style of a gypsy, contrary to article 8 of the Convention.

David Pannick QC and Mark Shaw (T Christie, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) for the Government; Nicolas Bratza QC, delegate, for the Commission; Peter Duffy and T. Jones (Luke Clements) for the applicant.

The court ruled that despite the fact that the applicant had herself acted in contravention of national law, the case concerned her "right to respect for [her] . . . home" and the refusal of planning permission constituted "interference by a public authority" with her exercise of that right.

The question was whether that interference was "necessary in a democratic society". The interests of the community were to be balanced against the applicant's right to respect for her home, a right which was pertinent to her and her children's personal security and wellbeing.

The law governing the decision-making process leading to the contested decision had entitled the applicant to appeal to the secretary of state. The appeal procedure comprised an assessment by a qualified independent inspector who had seen the land for herself and considered representations by the applicant and the district council.

The applicant's special needs as a gypsy following a traditional life-style were taken into account, as was the shortage of gypsy caravan sites in the area. The applicant's interest in being allowed to continue living on her land had been weighed against the general interest in conforming to planning policy.

The applicant had been offered alternative accommodation on a nearby official caravan site and, although the location was less satisfactory than her present dwelling, article 8 did not allow individuals' preferences as to their place of residence to override the general interest.

The applicant had been fined relatively small sums but had not been forcibly evicted. In the circumstances, the court considered that proper regard had been had to her predicament, and that the reasons relied on by planning authorities were relevant and sufficient, for the purposes of article 8, to justify the resultant intereference with her exercise of the right to respect for her home.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

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A glimpse of Major's winning personality

John Major, it is sometimes said, would easily win any election if only the voters had a chance to meet him personally. He has a great talent for chatty, direct, in-the-flesh communication. He is a poor conventional orator. He can come across on television as wooden and slightly dazed. But his eyeball-to-eyeball skills are remarkable. Conservative Central Office made a political fetish of his soapbox speaking in the 1992 campaign, and the box has now been turned into a political talisman or relic in Tory campaign videos. This is based, though, on a simple truth. Major is good when confronting a live audience. And he is getting better still. In his question-and-answer session at the Bournemouth conference yesterday he took tough questions; he answered some, he dodged others, but he did it all with relish and good humour. Shedding his jacket and speaking conversationally rather than rhetorically, he was clearly enjoying himself. He told good stories, with a decent comedian's timing.

More important still, the Prime Minister responded to some loaded, dogmatic questions with undogmatic and realistic answers. He did not succumb to cheap populism. He gave few hostages to the conference ultras, waiting so avidly for a little barbarism or unrestrained anti-Europeanism to applaud. His explanation of why he would not rule out British membership of a single European currency was nuanced, unheroic and compelling. Remarkably, given the Tory party's dark passions on this subject, this moderation was strongly applauded.

This is not to say that we agree with everything Mr Major said. He is deeply wrong in his arguments against political reform and his defence of the United Kingdom: it is not Labour or Liberal Democrat devolution which threatens to tear the country apart, it is the obstinate Tory refusal to listen to the persistent and reasonable Scottish majority voice which wants a parliament in Edinburgh. Major's enthusiasm for opening public sector trade unions to actions for damages by members of the public presses hard against the spirit, if not the letter, of Britain's legal obligations to protect the rights of free trade unionism. When asked by a Conservative representative to respond to the Dunblane massacre by taking a lead on the banning of privately held handguns, Major declined; instead, he should have taken the right and popular step, ahead of the Cullen inquiry. And his expressions of injured innocence in the face of the evidence surrounding the Hamilton case – his table-smacking impatience at the smearing of his party – was a grossly inadequate response to serious questions.

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But if yesterday's performance was really "John Major in the round", then it was impressive and, in tone, attractive. He is a formidable, gutsy campaigner who is at his best when his back is to the wall. Many in the Conservative Party, never mind the country, have complained about the quality of his leadership during the past few years. But the party could not ask for a better leader as it hurtles into this extended election campaign. Rather like Iain Lang, another of the star performers yesterday, the Prime Minister is effective precisely because he is not over-demonstrative. He is bad at being simplistic. In these unheroic times, his very lack of charisma is not unappealing.

It is tempting, therefore, to praise the party leader and snarl at the party – to say that John Major would be great if only he wasn't saddled with these maddened Euro-schismatics and Newt Gingrich-apeing extremists. This is an analysis with which much of the country would agree. Major remains relatively popular, and is regarded as decent; the Tories collectively earn neither of those descriptions.

There is, however, a flaw: it is that the state of the Conservative Party today cannot be separated from the actions and style of the man who has been its leader for the past six years. Mr Major in the round, as we saw him yesterday, is not Mr Major in completeness. Yesterday was his best self, doing what he does best, in pursuit of what he is most successful at doing (getting elected). But his original leadership decision, to seek compromise between the different factions of the party, has been partly responsible for Tory turmoil. Had he taken a clearly and ruthlessly pro- or anti-Maastricht position from 1992, and stood by it, there would have been bitterness and rebellion, but most of the party would instinctively have rallied behind him. More recently, he cannot be cleared of all blame for the stream of leaks directed at various colleagues, notably Kenneth Clarke. He has allowed his people, at Conservative Central Office and Number 10, to whisper supportively to those who want Britain to rule itself out of a single currency now. By allowing it, he has in effect encouraged it. And this whispering has persuaded the antis to keep pushing in the belief that they will further shift the policy. It has helped to cause the very problem that Major complains about.

This muttering and temporising is the less attractive side of the Prime Minister, and contrasts with the common sense on show yesterday. There is no point in being outraged about it. Politicians are like the rest of us, a mix of good and bad, sneaky and frank, open and closed. We know that leaders have been brought down by their own character flaws since the Greek tragedians began to compose. Our guess is that Mr Major's campaigning brilliance and personal appeal at this stage of his administration will not be enough to save him from the consequences of his taste for wily compromise in the previous four years. But his best self is, after all, very appealing indeed. Opposition politicians should get the video of yesterday's triumph, and shiver a little.

Fun at 'The Sun'

Schadenfreude has, of course, no place here. No one at this end of the newspaper market would want to revel in the sad and sorry sight of a deliciously smutty and very important story about the former wife of the heir to the throne proving to be fake. It could happen to anyone. It just happened to happen to *The Sun*. The fact that it was the victim of this cruel hoax had nothing, nothing whatever, to do with excess zeal or haste in hunting down the truth. It was simply bad luck.

So, how shall we put it? What about... YEAH!!! IT WOZ THE SUN WOT MUFFED IT!!!

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

Vouchers eat into council nursery places

Sir: Your leader on nursery vouchers (7 October) correctly exhorts the Government to forget dogma and allow time for a proper evaluation of the four local authorities which are currently testing the scheme.

What a pity you too fell prey to a dogma about Labour councils, referring to them as "typically blinkered". "Cautious, realistic, far-sighted" would be more appropriate epithets for councils which doubted the capacity of a scheme so obviously ill-thought-out to provide extra nursery places.

In Barnet, now a Labour-controlled council, we have given nursery education a top priority, expanding our provision by two extra nursery classes a year since our election in May 1994. Only the shortage of capital funding to adapt or extend buildings, and of revenue funding for staff and equipment, have prevented us moving at a faster pace.

If the money spent by the Government on advertising and administering the voucher scheme had been allocated to councils, we could have created more nursery places. Instead of this, the stability of our reception classes, which take children in the term before their fourth birthday, is threatened, together with nursery classes which take in both three- and four-year-olds.

Money currently used for the education of four-year-olds will be withdrawn from local education authorities, and only returned on a quarterly basis if each pupil's parent has managed to fill in and hand in five separate vouchers, one for each day of the week. This assumes the parents have all applied for and received their vouchers. Those not entitled to child benefit, such as refugees, who need a place most of all, will not even be given vouchers.

Existing high-quality, publicly funded nursery education will be put at risk for the financial benefit of parents already able to pay for private nursery and child care, who will receive a bonus of £1,100 just before the election. Yet despite Margaret Thatcher's promises, at no time has the Government offered money to councils for building, staffing or resourcing a programme of nursery expansion.

It is because we have had our eyes wide open that Labour councils have looked at the voucher scheme and seen through its shoddy pretence of concern for our children and their families.

Councillor ANNE JARVIS
Chair of Barnet Council's Education Committee
London NW4

Sir: The 100 or so delegates at a nursery voucher conference staged by Wandsworth were, I think, a little bemused by Fran Abrams's report of a so-called "leaked" council document conveying our experience of piloting the scheme ("Councils pressure ministers to drop nursery voucher scheme", 7 October).

Education officials from all parts of England and Wales had come to Wandsworth to hear first hand how the implementation of the vouchers had been handled. Our pre-conference publicity had made no secret of the fact that there were lessons to be learnt from the Wandsworth experience – particularly in the way information is provided to parents, many of whom may already have four-year-olds in school. You might fairly have reported that despite the inevitable misunderstandings at the start of such a controversial initiative, some 96 per cent of eligible Wandsworth parents claimed their vouchers.

You might equally have acknowledged that in a borough where every four-year-old is already guaranteed a nursery education, the potential for new places emerging was always going to be limited in the short term. You might too have conceded that where new places are being added – as they now are – these can prove immensely valuable as an extra stimulus for quality and high standards in competing schools.

The message from Wandsworth is that vouchers work – there are no administrative problems that cannot be overcome. While the Labour Party and the NUT might be joined in an unholy alliance trying to thwart the nationwide launch of the scheme, there is no justification for your headline claiming that this pressure is also coming from the pilot authorities.

Councillor EDWARD LISTER
Leader of Wandsworth Council
London SW18

Sir: Margaret Hodge's article on Labour's plans to open "early excellence centres" for children from birth to the age of five sounds a wonderful solution to the childcare problems of working parents (3 October). But as a part-time worker and mother of a three-year-old, I remain to be convinced.

My child is one of those who, having just started nursery for two and a half hours a day, is "shunted from home to childminder, to nursery, back to childminder, and eventually home". However, I would not exchange the caring relationship she has had for the past two years with her childminder for the convenience of a nursery place for 10 hours a day.

While my initial search for a childminder was extremely arduous and a nursery place for a whole day would have been a simpler solution, I believe my daughter has benefited far more from that close relationship, the trips to the shops, park, library, playgroup etc – the stuff of everyday home life for most babies to four-year-olds – than she would have from being "educated" in the more impersonal environment of a nursery. The disciplines of full-time education will be upon her soon enough.

SUZY ROSENTHAL
London N8

Michael Heath's Britain: Tory party conference, Bournemouth

Cancer is always treated urgently

Sir: The Labour spokesman on health made much of a pledge to remove waiting lists for cancer surgery ("Yesterday at the conference", 1 October). There has *never* been a waiting list for surgery for malignant disease.

A minutely small porportion of malignancies is so slow-growing and relatively non-infiltrative that it does not need urgent surgery. For the 99.9 per cent where time is vital, urgent priority has to be given. If delay led to failure of treatment, the surgeon would be vulnerable to legal action.

There must be *some* delay between provisional diagnosis of a malignancy and the confirmation by investigation, exploratory surgery and biopsy. Formal surgical treatment still cannot start immediately. It usually has to be planned in consultation between the surgeons and the oncologists (radiotherapy and chemotherapy). As soon as the decision to operate has been made, the patient goes on to the next available list, often resulting in cancellation of a less urgent operation.

No government can arrange for the instant treatment of cancer.

K. FERRIS FRCS DLO (retired)
Coxheath, Kent

Lobbying helps children too

Sir: In accusing the NSPCC of "wasting hard-earned pennies" by attending the Labour Party conference, Polly Toynbee (4 October) misunderstands this part of our work. Most of our money goes to provide direct services to children. However we also lobby for political and judicial change. We know that only by ensuring that the voice of children is heard by those in positions of power can we hope to create a world where children's rights are taken seriously. The hard-earned pennies of the NSPCC could not be better spent.

PHILLIP NOYES
Director of Communications, NSPCC
London EC2

Jury worries need an airing

Sir: I refer to Glenda Cooper's article "Twelve confused men and women" (30 September) and the ensuing correspondence (3, 4 October).

Do not blame the judges! They are given, by precedent, a simple definition of proof of guilt – by making the jury sure of it. Often the jury are also told that if they think the defendant's explanation is true, or may be true, they must acquit, because they cannot be sure of guilt. Beyond that, judges are strongly discouraged from elaborating.

Sam Rothenstein's jury presumably concluded that there was reasonable doubt because, although none of them believed the defendant's explanation, it was possible in fact and not fanciful, and they were not convinced he was lying. If so, that was a conscientious approach, not invalidated by the defendant's many previous convictions.

However, juries' concerns have been too long hidden, and it may be that judges do need to give greater assistance. Certainly, both the article and Mr Rothenstein's letter give further weight to calls for research into the jury system, now supported by the new Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham.

DAVID ROBERTS
Sidmouth, Devon
The writer was formerly a Crown Court recorder

Coronation Chair made in England

Sir: David Hamilton (letter, 7 October) suggests that the Coronation Chair might have a 12th or 13th-century Scottish provenance. Now in my eighth decade, I was a young journalist with *The Scotsman* when the Stone of Scone was removed from Westminster Abbey and in April 1953 I disclosed that the chair had been X-rayed during restoration by the then Ministry of Works. The Courtauld Institute of Art undertook chemical analysis of the materials used.

Edward I commissioned the chair from Master Walter of Durham, who made it between 1297 and 1300. Two small wooden leopards "painted and gilded [were] delivered to Master Walter to be placed on the Chair. Cost 13/4d. The account of Adam the goldsmith." A detailed report on the chair was made by the ministry. It was written by Westby Percival-Westcott. It details the history of the chair, which was made in England.

LESLIE JERMAN
Theydon Bois, Essex

Sir: In the light of the debate about the survival of the monarchy, and also of the possible return of the Stone of Destiny to Scone, it was somewhat alarming, or encouraging, depending on one's viewpoint, to read (*MacBeth, High King of Scotland* by Peter Berresford Ellis, first published 1980) of a legend that should the stone be taken away from Westminster it will mark the end of the British monarchy.

KATHLEEN BARRON
Stamford, Lincolnshire

Latin, language of a new Europe

Sir: Latin might not be a necessity (leading article, 8 October), but it has at least one immediate practical use in the modern world. It would certainly solve the problem of the choice of a common language for formal communication in the European Union.

It would also enable the next generation to make the European Parliament a more genuinely democratic body in the best Anglo-Saxon tradition. Speakers could address the assembly directly, after the manner of MPs in the House of Commons, rather than be inhibited by closed circuits, microphones and translators.

TREVOR COX
Croydon

Sir: In your baffling leader ("Latin for love, not learning" 8 October, whatever that means), you conclude: "The ancient languages are a beautiful ornament, not a necessity: let them be studied out of love alone." If you mean, "Do not impose the study of Latin on anyone," no one was proposing to do so, let alone Dr Tate of the School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, who was merely suggesting that Latin might benefit school pupils.

I assume you are hostile to the idea because you confess ignorance whether Latin "helps children with grammar and other romance languages". Fine basis for pontification, ignorance. But if successfully taught, how could Latin not? One may as well doubt whether well-taught maths helped children with computational skills.

If you wish to imply that there are more effective ways of helping children with grammar and romance languages, you may well be right. After all, one learns Latin because it is Latin. Help with grammar and romance languages is just a bonus.

Dr PETER JONES
Co-ordinating Committee for Classics
Newcastle upon Tyne

Squirrelled away

Sir: My father has suggested that I "take issue" with Mr Kington ("How the horse chestnut conkered Britain", 8 October) to advise him that there is another way that the horse chestnut propagates itself.

As is appropriate for the season, and somewhat against my parents' wishes, I collected 449 conkers in a Marks & Spencer carrier bag. Due to a disagreement concerning domestic storage of new, damp conkers, this bag was abandoned, carelessly I felt, immediately outside the back door, less than one yard from the cat flap.

Within a week the entire contents of the bag had either been eaten (a few) or taken and buried (the majority) in the surrounding gardens and lawns by the local population of grey squirrels. That's propagation!

ALEXANDRA OGLETHORPE
Woking, Surrey

Mainland isle

Sir: I enjoyed your article on the Skye Bridge ("Toll rises in Skye's battle for freedom road", 7 October). The reason that there are no tolls on the bridge to the Isle of Grain is that there is no bridge. Grain is attached to the Kent mainland and not separated by water.

RALPH JONES
Isle of Grain, Kent

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number.
Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk).
E-mail correspondents are asked to give a postal address. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

analysis

Women have traditionally voted Tory. Now, they're turning to new Labour. But can Tony Blair hold their allegiance? **Helen Wilkinson** decodes new surveys that might hold the answer

PHOTOMONTAGE: KEVIN BAYLISS

Women have changed, and have new role models (left to right): Juliet Stevenson, Barbara Follett, Cherie Blair, Carol Galley, Anita Roddick and Debbie Moore

The voter changes her mind

It is a hard fact for feminists to swallow and one that might have horrified some of the suffragettes. But if the electorate had only been made up of women, the Conservatives would have been in power continuously since the Second World War. This bias to the right – which gave the Tories a 9 per cent lead among women at the last election – has been one of the hidden constants of British politics.

But if recent polls are to be believed, the Tories are not only losing their lead among women, they are also seeing a catastrophic fall of support among young women, who may well carry their antipathy to the Tories throughout their life.

New data published today by Demos and the Fawcett Society shows just how much ground the Tories have lost. An analysis of MORI's poll data shows that of those women who have decided how they are going to vote in the next general election, only 31 per cent intend to vote Conservative, compared with 51 per cent for Labour. While the Tories can take some comfort from the fact that Tony Blair's satisfaction rating among women has fallen dramatically in the past six months – from plus 23 to plus 2 – John Major remains overwhelmingly unpopular among women, with a rating of minus 29.

But it is the generational shift that is most stark. If you analyse the party's support across each age group, support for Labour and the Tories among men is roughly constant. Among women, by contrast, there is a massive skew, with young women overwhelmingly supporting Labour, by 68 per cent to 18 per cent, compared with a Labour lead of only 5 per cent in the oldest age group.

In the short run this may not be as serious as it looks. There are far more women over 55 than in the 18 to 24 band – indeed they account for nearly a fifth of the whole electorate. But in the long run, it suggests that the Tories may have lost the capacity to reproduce their support. With only a few months to go before the general election, the Tories' secret weapon has ceased working.

Many explanations have been offered for the Tories traditional advantage among women. Although women tend to be more concerned with issues that might be deemed natural territory for Labour – like health and education – at a deeper level the Conservatives may have better exemplified women's values: their concerns for reliability and security, stable communities and strong families.

This identification has not only won the Tories millions of votes over the years, it has also attracted into the party thousands of activists, modern equivalents of the Primrose League, which at the beginning of this century was one of the most effective of all mass movements. At the top, power may have been held by the men, but the Conservatives could nevertheless make a genuine claim to be a more feminised party than a Labour Party steeped in a macho trade union culture.

What has changed? For older women, there is undoubtedly a sense of betrayal. Despite the Conservatives' rhetoric of family values, strong communities and its promise to be the party of law and order, the reality is that they have governed a country which now has one of the highest divorce rates in Europe, high levels of crime and a pervasive sense that public spaces are no longer safe.

But it's also that the Tories have failed to address the fears of many older women over pensions and long-term care: the latter has been a conspicuous failure, with earlier promises to come up with a bold new policy now apparently on ice. Older women are also heavily reliant on the NHS and on local transport services, particularly buses – neither a glowing success story for the Tories.

Meanwhile, new Labour has clearly identified older women as a key swing group. Tessa Jowell, former opposition spokesperson for women, led an effective campaign visiting women's institutes and listening to older women's concerns. Blair's incursions into enemy territory – law and order, family values and strong communities – have not just been an explicit attempt to woo middle England and Ford Sierra man. They have also been sending reassuring signals to older generations of women that Labour is now the party of security and reliability.

But the more fundamental problem for the Tories is that they have failed to keep up with the changing lives of a younger generation of women. My research clearly shows that young women today are more oriented to success than their parents, and significantly more feminist in their values, even if they often do not adopt the label. Many are not just working to earn money but are busy carving out careers.

Ironically, the very success of Margaret Thatcher in offering a role model of female achievement has encouraged a generation of women to reject the older Tory assumption that women should sit quietly in the background, devoting themselves to their homes and children. High-profile role models such as Body Shop's Anita Roddick, the city high-flyer Carol Galley and Debbie Moore of Pineapple show that it is possible for a woman to succeed in the business world. Cherie Blair, too, shows that it is possible to successfully combine career and motherhood as well demonstrating that there is nothing to stop a professional woman from earning more than her husband. And high-profile Labour-supporting women, including the actress Juliet Stevenson and the style guru Barbara Follett, make clear the identification of success and new Labour.

Instead of harnessing these ambitions, the Tories have been sending contrary signals. The rhetoric of back to basics seemed to suggest that the Tories wanted to put women back in the kitchen, rather than celebrating the feminisation of the economy which they had presided over. Worse, the party itself has consistently failed to select women candidates in reasonable numbers and to promote women to the upper reaches of the party, an issue that is now causing discontent in the ranks of Tory women. Conservative Central Office under the stewardship of vice-chair Dame Angela Rumbold was reported some months back to be encouraging local associations to look kindly on female candidates to increase women's visibility in the party, but so far it appears to have had little success.

Labour has better understood the importance of these underlying shifts in the power of men and women. However crude and unpopular quotas have been, they did prove extraordinarily effective at changing the party's complexion. After the next election almost a third of the Parliamentary Labour Party is likely to be women, whereas the Tories may end up with fewer women than they have now.

But the real failing of the Conservatives is one of political strategy. Unlike the other parties, the Conservatives have been reluctant to champion women's issues and have failed to adequately develop policies for working women. The costs of this are fast becoming apparent. Child care is clearly a vote winner for many women as are other issues – such as low pay, part-time work, the long-hours culture and the need to balance work and family life. Elsewhere, politicians who have addressed these issues have won great dividends. President Clinton, for example, made a direct appeal to working women in his first presidential election campaign. He promised some family leave and put together a package of policies that would benefit working women. They subsequently rewarded him with their votes. In his second campaign, he has gone a step further, expanding parental and family leave and offering more policies for working women. (For the past six months at least the President's support among women has been much greater than among men, between 10 to 20 percentage points depending upon the poll, leaving Dole out in the cold as far as women are concerned.) Here in Britain, Labour and Liberal Democrats have taken the lesson to heart by making policy commitments to parental leave and affordable child care.

The danger for the Tories is that they increasingly look old and out of touch, unable to attract a younger generation either to vote or to join, let alone to opt for a political career. A recent study of the membership found that the average age of a Conservative member is now 61. More than half are over 65, and only 5 per cent are under 35. Meanwhile, Labour under Tony Blair has transformed itself from an ageing to a more youthful party. The majority of new members are under 40, and at last week's conference it was striking that many delegates were there for the first time ever.

You might expect the Tories to be panicking. But instead one senses a certain complacency, an assumption that the Conservatives will naturally remain the party of women. The weight in the electorate of older women, still attached to more traditional values, may encourage this complacency. But the failure to recognise that Thatcher's Children – the generation of women brought up under Conservative rule who expect equality with men as a matter of course, and have clear needs and priorities which are not being addressed – must be unwise in the long term, not least because most people take their party allegiance with them throughout their life. Just as in the late Seventies Labour neglected its working-class base and lost power for a generation, so in the Nineties it may be that the Conservatives are being similarly negligent with their base among women voters.

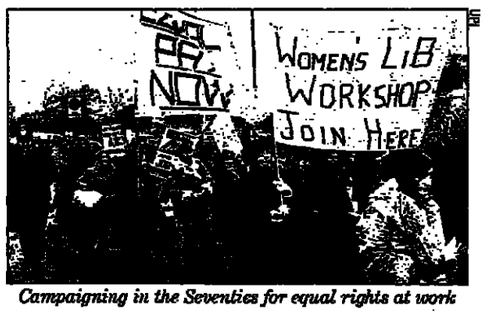
But other parties should also be wary of complacency. Women are not impressed by often conflicting messages that come from other leaders' mouths.

When Paddy Ashdown (who, incidentally, is the least liked party leader among women) launched the Liberal Democrat policy statement on women on Sunday before his speech to the Liberal Democrat conference, he told his audience that it was the most important document that week. Two days later he failed to even mention it in his conference speech. A week later Tony Blair had the potential to connect with many women's frustrated ambitions in his call for an "age of achievement" – but the great majority of his examples and his metaphors (including the football imagery of "Labour coming home") were male.

Women are politically promiscuous. Almost a quarter have not yet decided how they'll vote in the next election. And all the evidence shows that while many women don't make up their minds until the very last moment, in part because they are more cautious about their choices than men, they turn out to vote in greater numbers.

For this reason, the Tories' challenge is to take the other parties on with practical policies that will celebrate and consolidate the dawning of an "age of achievement" for women that they have presided over, and which has brought unprecedented numbers of women into the professions, into business, and into higher education.

Helen Wilkinson is a project director at Demos. She will be speaking at lunchtime today at a fringe meeting on Winning Women's Votes in Bournemouth.



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The melancholy balladeer has a field day

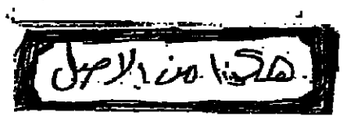
Miles Kington

As today is National Poetry Day, I feel I ought to enter into the spirit of things by bringing you some modern folk verse. Regular readers will know that I am a great collector of motorway ballads, these being folk ballads, often quite long ones, which I get from people at service areas or to whom I give lifts.

Today's verse was told me by a melancholy man whom I picked up at Leigh Delamere on the way to London and who spent a long time sniffing before he recited these verses.

The fields beside the motorway
Are often full of straw and hay,
Though which is which I do not know
As I am an urban so-and-so,
So ignorant of different crops
I can't tell maize or flax from hops,
But yet they make a glorious sight,
These fields, when they are coloured white
(Which means, I think, the flowering broad bean)
Or blue (is that flax?) or just plain green.
In springtime, when it's brilliant yellow,
"Rape!" is what you'll hear me bellow.
In autumn, when stubble smoke drifts by,
"Bloody farmers!" you'll hear me cry.
Not that you often see a farmer,
On foot or in his tractor's armour;
These fields are always empty of folk.
A lonely ash or big old oak
Is often the only thing you see
Breaking the field's monotony.
Except in summer, when they place
Those huge great sprinklers on its face
To shoot out loads of water – whoosh! –
And give the thirsty plants a douche.
(It seems as if they never can
Be subject to a hosepipe ban.
How can farmers get permission
For such endless water emission ?
Perhaps it's easier to make an oasis
If you've got friends in higher places...)
Yes, when I'm driving down the M
And suffering from motorway tedium,
I often let my eyesight wander
And play upon the great, green yonder,
Away from the road, where it should be,
And roam around the scenery
In search of pleasure for the eye,
In fields of wheat or oats or rye,
Rippling like the far-off prairie
Or full of cattle for the dairy...
But there's one field I can't abide.
A field past which I quickly slide,
A field from which I avert my gaze,
A field which fills me with malaise,
And that's the field which now stands bare
But once had a horse, and jumps, in there.
A field where a rusting petrol can
Shows where the horse jumps once began
Shows where a teenage girl and horse
Lived for jumping round the course.
Betjeman country! Thelwell land!
Where horses are lovely and girls are grand!
Where a groom is a chap that holds the halter
And not a man who stands at the altar,
Where the horse is centre of the universe
And parents are glad it's nothing worse.
For while a girl is keen on horses,
There won't be marriages and divorces.
Ah, this is the stuff of girlish dreams,
Where the hay lies thick and the harness gleams!
Once the grass was short and kempt,
And the pony was groomed, and dreams were dreamt
Of horse events and three-day shows,
But now the seeded dandelion blows
And the poles lie rotting on the ground,
Awaiting in vain another round.
The grass grows long and the horse grows stout,
And the teenage girl is no longer about.
No longer the pairing of girl and pony,
For she is off with her boyfriend, Tony.

At this point the man broke off and burst into tears. When I asked him gently if he, too, had lost a daughter, he said no, but he had lost several thousand pounds equipping one with horse and fields and jumps, and every time he saw one of these abandoned fields he sobbed at the thought of all that money wasted.



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Baloney, nonsense – and the truth about Ken Clarke

Donald Macintyre

The Chancellor's huge strength as an electoral asset depends on his credible language. People believe him

It was always going to be the most difficult debate of the week. Kenneth Clarke faces the Tory conference this morning having worked harder on his speech than in any previous year. But is the party ready to listen? How they receive him will test to destruction whether the Tories still have a will to win.

In the illusionist world of Tory right-wing demonology, Kenneth Clarke is hopelessly committed to the big state, likes taunting his opponents with his distaste for unaffordable tax cuts, and is all too dismissive of calls to reduce spending to well below 40 per cent of national income. The reality could scarcely be more different. In the actual, rather than the rhetorical, Cabinet battle, the roles are reversed. Clarke's current struggle to cut spending to make room for tax cuts is meeting some of the stiffest resistance from those most ideologically opposed to him – Peter Lilley at Social Security, Michael Portillo at Defence and Michael Howard at the Home Office.

In the illusory world, these ministers are state shrinkers to a man; in the real world they run big spending departments and are fighting for their budgets against a hard-nosed Chancellor who wants to contain them. It's a pretty safe bet that Clarke will today specify education, health and police as the main exceptions to his determination to bear down heavily on spending. That doesn't, for example, leave much room for the expansive prison building programme to which Howard is personally committed.

To square this circle some elements of the right have a new and more sophisticated theory. Clarke wouldn't be as irritatingly orthodox about the tax and spending equation in the run-up to the election if he didn't have a secret agenda – to bring down Britain's budget deficit to three per cent of GDP simply to meet the Maastricht criterion for EMU membership.

This, too, is baloney. Clarke is confident that Britain is at least as well placed to meet the terms as its other big partners. If the European economy prospers and grows, Britain's will too. If it doesn't, then Germany and France also are going to be in deep trouble. In fact Clarke's reasons have everything to do with the British economy. A large part of today's speech will no doubt be devoted to arguing – with some justice – that it is a generation or more since a government has entered an election with such good economic prospects. But debt interest is currently costing more than the entire defence budget. Britain's debt to GDP ratio, at around 53 per cent, is well below the EMU criterion of 60 per cent. The reasons he wants it to start falling are entirely domestic.

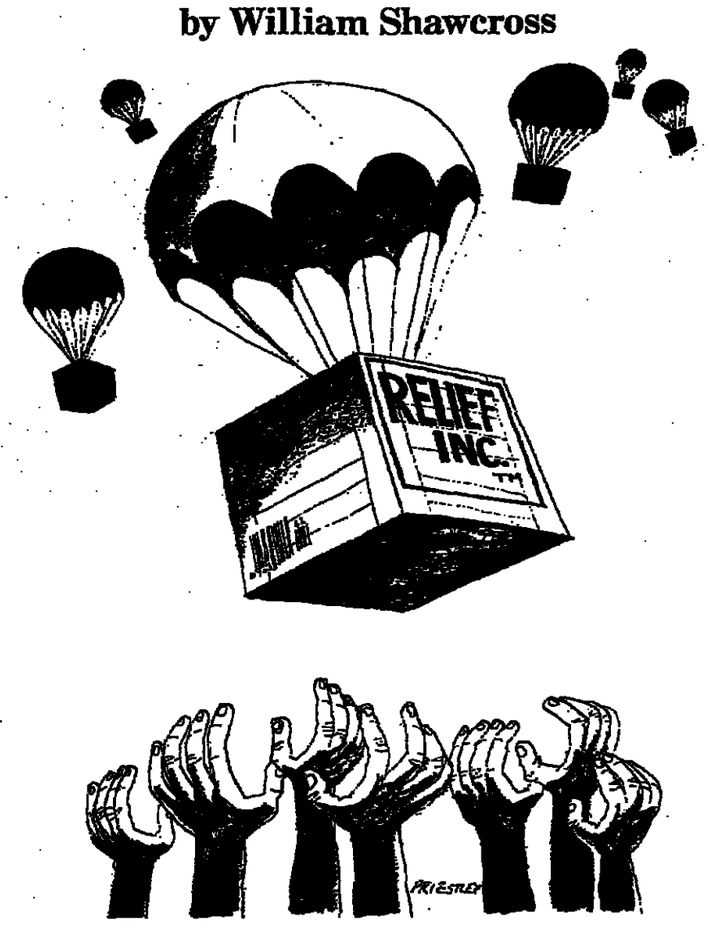
But the campaign against Clarke over the single currency isn't illusion-free either. It isn't an illusion that he would like to see Britain in a single currency – though he means it when he says that he could oppose entry if the Franco-German axis decided to fudge Maastricht in order to force through EMU for political reasons before their economies are ready. As it happens, the cheekiest part of the BBC interview which so irritated the Eurosceptics wasn't his loosely worded gibe that it would be "pathetic" to rule out now British EMU entry in the first wave. It was the virtually unnoticed implication at the end of it that Britain would have to decide after the election between joining the first-class countries in EMU or staying with the second-class countries outside it. But it was scarcely surprising that he bit back. The Eurosceptics had broken the truce agreed in April. What's more, as the more sensible sceptics see, Kenneth Clarke's huge strength as an electoral asset depends on his credible use of language about the economy. Because he speaks candidly – if sometimes loosely – people believe him. He can't speak like a human being on the economy and like a robot on Europe.

No, the most dangerous illusion is that the issue can be reopened between now and polling day without terminal damage to the Tories' electoral hopes – hopes which after yesterday's impressive show of unity ought to be flickering back into life. The illusion takes many forms. One is that Major will declare his personal opposition to a single currency in his election address – the so-called Huntingdon declaration. To understand how suicidal that would be, imagine this one question to Clarke on the stump: "Do you agree with what the Prime Minister says in his election address?" Forget it. Another is that for the Government to rule out a single currency would suddenly guarantee election victory. This week's Gallup poll for the *Daily Telegraph* showed majority support among voters – including Tory voters – for keeping the options open. And the third is that it won't be credible to go through the election with an open mind because the EMU decision will be only "weeks" away. There is considerable debate about EMU timing within the Treasury. An extreme view is that Britain could signify its decision as late as 1 January 1999. But even if that is unrealistic, it's now likely that the timetable will slip by several months. And with it the obscure stipulation in the Maastricht treaty that Britain "may" indicate its decision to join by the end of 1997.

There were clear signs yesterday of the Tory party gradually beginning to reassemble itself as the formidable electoral machine it is. The signal success of John Major's face-to-face conversation with the conference is one. The warm reception Malcolm Rifkind got for his courageous warning that it would not be in the national interest to rule out EMU is another. If the conference sticks to this form it won't turn today's economic debate into a bear garden. The party will have kept alive a glimmer of hope that against all the odds it could still win. But for how long?

Never mind Oxfam, DHL can deliver

by William Shawcross



Water from Evian, banking from Amex. If private companies can handle aid for the poor better than the charities, let them do it

How far can pity be privatised and how far can or should the market dominate disaster relief? These are questions that increasingly vex the international aid community.

They have just been examined in detail at an extraordinary conference in the city that touts itself as "the world's humanitarian capital" – Geneva. At "WorldAid 96" commerce and charity jostled somewhat nervously together.

WorldAid 96 was a controversial, bizarre, slightly macabre and poignant meeting of hard-headed businessmen, supposedly altruistic do-gooders from charities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Oxfam, Médecins Sans Frontières, government officials, soldiers and journalists.

The scourge of land mines was an important focus. Outside the exhibition stood a vast white tank-like machine that was designed to flail land mines into exploding, underneath posters of a semi-naked stripper advertising a Geneva nightclub.

Inside, one-legged models demonstrated how hundreds of thousands of poor people in Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia who have had their legs blown off can strap on and take off the latest plastic substitutes. Other stands were filled with hi-tech water purifiers, cars, communications equipment, high-protein biscuits, and vastly complicated mobile kitchens from Sweden.

The theme of the meeting (troubling to the humanitarians) was embodied in the question: "Could DHL deliver food more cheaply than the United Nations or Save The Children?" If so, how long can the charities survive?

Since the end of the Cold War there have been literally scores of vicious little and not so little conflicts around the world. At least 50 are raging today. About 300 million people in the world are hit by war and disaster each year. These victims are the consumers for whom the participants of WorldAid compete.

In 1971, emergency aid amounted to $200m worldwide. In 1994, Rwanda alone cost more than $1bn. Last year some $8bn was spent on disaster relief and peacekeeping.

Privatisation and the markets are now the only games in town – in any town around the world – says Nick Cater, an editor of *Crosslines Global Report*, a journal that takes a sceptical look at the humanitarian business. He argues that it is the aid industry's job to take the rough edges off capitalism.

He says that "'old aid' depended on colonialism, left-wing solidarity, guilt and optimism. Now the end of the Cold War, galloping investment in emerging markets and a new world that is private and Pacific-based spells the end of all that."

Good motives are not enough these days.

WorldAid 96 was like any other trade show – except that this one dealt with combating the weapons of war and foiling the tools of death and deprivation. The exhibition was pushed by the Nordic governments and aid agencies apparently anxious to expand their share of the international market.

It was arranged by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA); and attracted 274 companies, 45 aid journalists who make their livings reporting the pity of modern disasters.

Some humanitarian officials were nervous at the open display of the marriage of business and charity, and refused to attend or to have their names used. They think of themselves as dealing in life, death and ethics – areas in which they feel the profit motive should have no place. Others are more robust, acknowledging that aid *is* business, and always will be.

Moreover, the total aid money available is now falling from the high point of the early Nineties. That fall has introduced a note of urgency, if not panic, for all the WorldAid 96 participants.

Aid agencies must be much more efficient. That means not only that they have to cut costs, but must deliver a better product to their consumers, the 300 million affected by disaster.

Not many agencies have yet understood enough of this. But the companies have. That is why they were at WorldAid 96 and are lobbying donor governments, armies, the UN, trying to sell their wares and their systems. In this privatised and privatising world, says Cater, the real question is why America's biggest discount chain, Wal Mart, cannot supply the food, Evian the water and American Express the banking for refugees.

This sort of talk fills the old aid agencies with horror. But if all the boring transport and delivery services were privatised, the NGOs could then concentrate on triage, on healing and protecting their "customers" and the other more obviously "moral" decisions they think they are best at.

And, in fact, the gulf between business and aid officials is not nearly as wide as the latter like to think. NGOs have at least three different roles – they must provide assistance, act as witnesses to awful events and they also have to raise money and their own profiles.

And so they compete with each other, just as the commercial suppliers at the exhibition compete with each other, too. Like any car company, they have their own designer-logos, flags, T-shirts, watches, flak jackets and other branded apparel of the television age.

About 200 different NGOs flocked to Rwanda after the genocide of 1994. Some of them did marvellous work but others were absolutely hopeless, had no experience of the area and sent people with zero training. They were there only to be able to be seen on television back home and thus to raise money.

At the higher end of the scale, during the war in Bosnia, the French aid group Equilibre had both a profit and a non-profit arm: it delivered food to Bosnia and then filled the trucks with goods produced in former Yugoslavia for sale in France. That seemed a good mix of the profit motive and altruism.

In a thoughtful discussion of all these issues, Michael Taylor of Christian Aid suggested that, "the morals of ought spring out of our philosophic understanding of what is". Tasks should be given to whoever can carry them out most effectively on behalf of the victims.

What seems certain is that by the time of WorldAid 98 the concept of "Relief Inc" will be far more widely accepted than today. By then, everything in camps will be bar-coded and refugees will probably have credit cards. There will be no other way.

john walsh

The British should learn how to roll their credits at the dinner table

Had dinner with John Lahr, the *New Yorker* scribe, drama critic and biographer of Joe Orton. Mr Lahr has recently turned down the chance of writing the life of Rosanne Barr, with the co-operation of the lady herself, and ensuring himself a pension of half a million dollars. (It seems he couldn't guarantee the co-operation of

Roseanne: parental choice

Ms Barr's parents, without whose testimony the project was fatally compromised.)

A delightful fellow, Mr Lahr, with a nice line in family anecdotes. Once, when the Lahr family was dining with a party of friends that included Harold Pinter, Lahr's young son, Chris, after listening to the gruffly martial playwright for a moment, took his father to one side.

"Daddy," he said, "Is that man a policeman?"

"No, son," said Lahr. "He is a very fine writer."

"Oh," said the boy. Then a thought struck him. "Can he do a W?"

Lahr, who has lived in England for 25 years, was impressed by a phenomenon. "I'm used to it, but Americans are always amazed by the way British people don't roll their credits at the dinner table." Meaning? "Since work is the only signifier of class and success in America, New Yorkers will tell you just how important they are, and what they do, in the first few sentences. They get alarmed by the way British people won't do that." And get this: although it may be a gaffe to ask a famous film director what exactly he does, it's far *worse* not to ask, if you don't know.

Exhausting, eh? But I'm with the Yanks on this one. How often has one sat chatting about the shortcomings of the Eurostar or the price of Safeways' own-brand jelly beans with a fat biker in a wispy moustache, only to discover later that it was Sir Harrison Birtwistle?

Well never, actually. But a friend reports that the other day she was seated next to a well-scrubbed public-schoolboy called Nick in a wine bar by the British Museum. They talked about the weather, Henry James and the menu. She asked, What do you do? "I run a little gallery." Sort of an art gallery? "That sort of thing."

She thought of those tiny little sculpture emporia in the Portobello Road. Did he get many people coming in? "Oh, one or two ..." he said vaguely, and seemed relieved to return to discussing the tennis. Only as she watched his retreating figure crossing Pied Bull Yard did she learn he was Mr Nicholas Penny, curator of the little National.

One's little gallery

On my desk lands a copy of *Playground Memories*, a privately printed book of celebrity reminiscences of schooldays, compiled to raise cash for two schools in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, and introduced by the increasingly nice Mr Major. As with all such compilations, it features blokeish confessions from sporting types (Geoff Hurst admits to being taken to court and fined £1 for kicking tennis balls over a neighbour's garden wall) and staggeringly boring contributions from MPs.

Either they're the pipe-smoking, ruminative type ("I wonder when the word 'playground' was first used? It has a sort of late Victorian feel about it" – Kenneth Baker) or else the humourless-bureaucrat style ("Effective school ground use is one of the greatest gifts we can give our children ..." – Paddy Ashdown). But leafing through, one pulls up short at the contribution by Michael Heseltine. He has nothing to report about schooldays, the maintenance of playgrounds or anything else.

Instead, he tells the thunderstruck scholars of Amersham about an angling competition he entered in 1941. Using a rod and bread-paste bait, he fished for half an hour and caught nothing. Then ...

" 'Try them,' said a voice offering me a can of wriggling maggots. One and a half hours later, I had caught 39 fish. They weighed 11 and three-quarter ounces. I won seven shillings and sixpence and I was the junior champion for a year. Happy days!"

Well, there's a lesson for life: if you want to get on, you must acquire a number of hapless, defenceless, wriggling invertebrates, impale them on a hook and drown them, for your own greater glory and advancement. Whether they're miners, junior ministers or members of Her Majesty's press.

Mr Heseltine would, I dare say, rather be seen dead than playing conkers, then or now. But as my daughter has started arriving home with armfuls and can-loads of the things, I've been slipping into Sad Old Git mode. Ah happy days, *Ubi sunt* etc. How my trusty 95-er sliced and cracked its way through the chestnut sheen of a myriad tiny opponents, splintering their proud, purple-ochre carapaces with cruel ... Well no, actually, my conker usually went rolling across the skool tarmac after the first blow (inadequate knot expertise – I blame myself) to be stomped to a pulp by the cruel bullies of Lower Elements.

Is it too late to get my own back by entering the World Conker Championships this Saturday in Ashton, Northamptonshire? I rang the Isle of Wight chapter of the international conker circuit, whose regional heat was played last Sunday. Top dog in horse-chestnut circles is a chap called Simon Dabell, who has a master criminal's grasp of conker-cheating lore.

"The traditional method, still very popular, is to soak the conker in vinegar for four weeks, then bake it very gently in a low oven, like an Aga, until the shell is rock hard. Other people swear by simply leaving it on a mantlepiece for a year. Still others keep it on a ledge inside the chimney for six months."

Mr Dabell strongly disapproves of all forms of sharp practice, "which is why we supply contestants with all sporting materials". He's a stickler for rules: you make a hole with a drill, not a skewer, for fear of ruining the grain; you use a shoelace, not a string to dangle it from: you must leave nine inches of lace

They stoop to conker

between conker and thumb. But I'm afraid this may all be getting a little too arcane for you.

And now that, according to Mr Dabell, schools are starting to ban conker games in the playgrounds of the South-east (potentially too violent, and you run the risk of leaving your adversary with a terrific bruise on the knuckle), the whole concept of having fun with shiny nuts will die out anyway, and the nation's youth can go back to exercising their hand-eye co-ordination with Mortal Kombat and Schoolyard Slaughter.

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10 Independent Decade

Early plaudits: In its first year the 'Independent' never lacked a story. It was boomtime – the air was heady with confidence in the Thatcher 'miracle', Nigel Lawson was riding high

From the Lawson to the Clarke boom. The *Independent*'s three former business editors and its present one chart 10 extraordinary years of experiment in economic management, the City and business, a period spanning the boom of the Lawson years, the deep recession of the early 1990s and the economic recovery of today. Never before has the world of business and economics so consistently hit the front pages. From Guinness to Barings, this has been 10 years to remember

From Big Bang to City scandal

Sarah Hogg
Business Editor, 1986-89

The first front page of the *Independent* led with a story we had been hoarding for a week, praying that the international spy network of the *Financial Times* would not catch a whiff of it before Day One. This "revealed", as we journalists like to say, that the President of the Bundesbank had made a secret visit to Mrs Thatcher to try to persuade her to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism.

It caused a gratifying little flutter in Downing Street, of the kind I was to experience less enjoyably from the other side of the tracks, as head of the prime minister's policy unit, just a few years later. There was even more gratifying irritation at the *FT*. Well, there you go – some stories just never seem to die. Ten years of the newspaper's life have reverberated with the politics of the pound.

But the echoes of 1986 that sound most strongly today have little to do with macro economics. They are on the micro side – what Nigel Lawson was, at the time, busy christening the supply-side revolution. The *Independent* was born on the crest of a wave of privatisation, deregulation, the breakdown of restrictive practices and trade barriers. The year 1986 was the *annus mirabilis* of supply-side reform. It was the year of Big Bang in the City; the height of the financial services revolution. It was the high tide of privatisation: Sid was about to buy his shares in British Gas; British Telecom had already left the public sector dock; electricity and water were on their way. Europe was launching its Single Market. Britain was leading the fight for the destruction of trade barriers between the countries of the European Community – and in the process signing up for a boost to Brussels powers that its prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, was to recoil from so spectacularly only four years later.

Back home, the very language of business changed. Deregulation and re-regulation added their own dictionary of acronyms. OFT begat Oftel, Ofgas, Ofwat and Offer – with the lottery and rail regulators still to come. We became familiar with RPI-X and Power Pools, with internal markets and new models of accountability.

It is no coincidence that London Economics, the economics consultancy whose chairmanship I am now taking over from John Kay, was also created in 1986 – and plunged instantly into the business of modelling and interpreting these new structures. Britain was in the vanguard of a number of structural reforms which required both government and the newly privatised utilities to think hard about the way markets work.

Only weeks after the *Independent's* own revolutionary beginnings, the City went Big Bang. The actual event was something of an anti-climax. Just as there were few prisoners left in the Bastille by the day it was stormed by the *sans-culottes*, so by 27 October 1986, all the big City firms had of course already made most of their dispositions.

Nevertheless, it marked the end of an era, and the start of a furious battle for market share, as the grand old mahogany panelling between brokers and jobbers came down and Chinese Walls between market-makers, fund managers and corporate finance departments (mostly) went up. (To our readers' evident relief, we charted their way through the new money maze by serialising Michael Brett's admirable new book, *How to Read the Financial Pages*. A decade later, I was delighted to discover that it is still required reading for graduate entrants to one of Britain's most distinguished merchant banks.)

The *Independent* itself was the product of a breakthrough in the long battle of attrition between newspaper publishers and printing unions. I was only one of a number of its business writers to have migrated from the *Times*. That newspaper's Murdoch management had formed the shock troops that broke the power of the Fleet Street printers, sweeping us to Wapping at the beginning of the year, where we produced the paper inside a barbed-wire encampment, surrounded by now-redundant strikers.

It was a brilliant campaign, but management was slow to appreciate that they would not be the only winners. Their victory broke down the barriers to entry into national newspaper production; the journalists they had tended to see as mere cannon fodder thereby gained the freedom to mount their own competitive challenge. In 1986, Britain was busy re-learning the meaning of markets – and in the newspaper business, the lesson was particularly sharp.

The *Independent* was a big start-up business, but not as big as it would have had to have been in the days when newspapers were obliged to employ their own printers. From the beginning three areas were seen to be crucial to our success: foreign; arts; and business coverage.

It was the age of the yuppie – our readers were young, affluent and concentrated in the South-east, though we had some clusters of loyal readership in Scotland and the North. Statistical correlations produced some curious pieces of information: if you slept under a duvet – still by no means universal in the mid-1980s – you were almost certain to be an *Independent* reader.

In our first year, we never lacked a story. It was boomtime – the economy grew 4 per cent in 1986, accelerating to nearly 5 per cent in 1988. Inflation was at its low point, the air was heady with confidence in the Thatcher "miracle", the budget was heading for surplus, Nigel Lawson was riding high. It was election time – Mrs Thatcher won her easiest victory in the summer of 1987, which did not stop Downing Street panicking halfway through the campaign. Massive political advertising boosted the newspaper's coffers that spring. On the final day of election week, the editor, Andreas Whittam-Smith, wrote a leader without a conclusion, asking each of three trusted lieutenants to write a paragraph in favour of each of the contesting parties.

I wrote one for the Tories, arguing that it would be dishonourable for the *Independent*, the direct beneficiary of Thatcherite reforms of the labour laws, without which it could never have come into being, to support anyone else. Others wrote equally passionately for Labour and the Liberals. The editor read all three – and ran the leader without a conclusion. With our readers almost exactly split between the three parties – more evenly than the readers of any other paper – it was probably the right market decision.

With the late Peter Jenkins, this newspaper achieved a reputation for political insight that could never be matched. But politics was not our only excitement. In the City, it was scandal time: it was a tremendous coup that David Brewerton broke the Guinness story in the *Independent*. It was crash time; when the bottom fell out of the stock market that autumn, my financial editor of the time, Peter Wilson-Smith, was able to work round the clock for days, and our flexible production techniques paid dividends. We led the revolution in newspaper graphics, charting the extraordinary global ripples of the crisis, pushing the limits of our edition times.

Time rose-tints memory. The exhaustion of launching a fully fledged daily newspaper, determined to compete with the best, is easily forgotten, although I know I never worked so hard again until I entered Downing Street. I remember the good times: putting together our Budget coverage (and boy, were there some Budgets in the late 1980s) with half the team and twice the effect – or so we believed – of the other broadsheets. I remember the special Wincott award for our pages – an early recognition of their quality. I remember the nervous moments too: we had our share of writs, notably from Maxwell, from whom I only wish we had earned more. Most alarming of all I remember sitting in the High Court watching Jeremy Warner, the present Business Editor, refuse to reveal his sources, praying that his lordship would not seek to make an example by banging him up.

I left the *Independent* in 1989, too weary to cope with the paper's second great gamble, launching a Sunday paper. But just days later, Nigel Lawson, Chancellor throughout my time with the newspaper, finally resigned – and I was honoured to return to write, I hope, a valedictory that did him justice. My final, very personal memory of the *Independent*, however, comes from the following year.

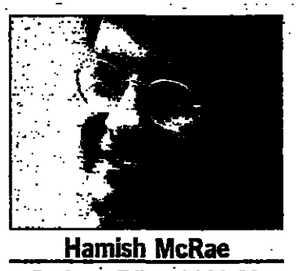
In 1990, sitting in my office at the *Daily Telegraph*, watching the wires as they reported the ins and outs of a reshuffle, I noted that my husband Douglas – then a junior minister at the DTI – had been called in to Number 10. I rang him to ask what had happened. "Oh, nothing," he said. "I was in there for something quite separate from the reshuffle."

Like a mug, I believed him. The following morning the *Independent's* lead story was that he had turned down the job of Paymaster-General, at the Treasury, because he felt I might feel obliged to resign as a financial journalist.

He had tried to keep this sacrifice to himself. Only when I threatened to ring the editor did he finally admit it was true. Had it not been for the *Independent*, I would never have known. The story – with a picture of Douglas in one of his now-famous hats – is my favourite press cutting of all.

Sarah Hogg is now chairman of London Economics.

Boom turns to bust as the yuppie years come to an end



Hamish McRae
Business Editor, 1989-91

One task of the financial section of a newspaper is to pick out the big forces influencing the economy before everyone else, to be – as the jargon of the markets would have it – ahead of the curve. As it happened the 18 months from November 1989 to June 1991 when I was editing these pages coincided with the first stage of the early 1990s recession. It saw the shift from slowing growth to something close to despair: the time when it seemed the recession would never end. So I suppose the first test is whether we, as a paper, were indeed ahead of the curve, whether we picked up the danger signals in time.

The honest answer is "not really". The tone of the paper's coverage at the end of 1989 was beginning to show some caution. But while we made it clear that the boom was over – "the end of the longest uninterrupted economic expansion since the Second World War" I wrote on 2 November 1989 – neither I nor my colleagues fully grasped quite how severe the recession would become. That same piece carried some warnings – "the boom ... is already ending more sharply" – and saw some dangers: "Will there be so much disruption over the next couple of years that growth in the 1990s will be even slower than it otherwise would have been?" But we all failed to see how catastrophic that period would be.

This newspaper group also failed to see the consequences on its own business, for the 18 months neatly spanned the period of optimism which led to the launch of the *Independent on Sunday* and the grinding financial pressures which provoked its ensuing partial merger with the daily.

This was the end of what we now call the Lawson boom. Nigel Lawson had resigned as Chancellor at the end of October 1989, and a young John Major had just taken over. Mr Major's spell in the Treasury was unremarkable. He produced one Budget, in March 1990, which he called "a Budget for savers" and which introduced Tessas. But as we reported at the time, the budget did little to cool the still-overheated economy, or curb inflation. Our columnist Bill Robinson (who subsequently became adviser to Mr Major's successor, Norman Lamont) reckoned that the Chancellor was gambling and that if he was wrong there would be more pain to come.

Base rates were then at 15 per cent. As we moved through 1990 it gradually became clearer that the economy was slowing. But even in the autumn it was still not clear that recession was upon us. Once it was, and once inflation seemed to be falling, the right policy would have been to cut interest rates. But we could not do so. Since 1988 sterling had been informally tied to the German mark, and policy was directed at keeping it there. Just as in the late 1980s we had been unable to push rates up fast enough, now we were unable to cut them when it became clear that recession was the greater danger.

On the eve of the 1990 Tory party conference in October 1990, sterling was formally linked with the mark in the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). John Major, still at that stage Chancellor, did take 1 per cent off base rates to the general acclaim of his colleagues. But in the months that followed, as recession deepened, that was clearly not enough. As it happened, he did not have to face recession as Chancellor, for little more than a month after that conference, his elevation to prime minister had passed the job of Chancellor to Norman Lamont.

The Budget the following spring was altogether more sober. In November 1990 the Treasury was still forecasting some growth in 1991. By the following March the forecast was for minus 2 per cent. That Budget was technically neutral, with a rise in VAT to 17.5 per cent used to pay for the abolition of the poll tax. But a neutral Budget only made sense if it enabled interest rates to be cut sharply. That was not to happen for another 18 painful months, when sterling's departure from the ERM enabled the UK to take back control of its monetary policy.

By June 1991, the picture was bleak indeed. "Treasury gloom over enduring recession" ran our front-page headline and my commentary on the lack of any recovery in manufacturing started with the words "It is, alas, the same subject again," and ended with "sad, but true".

If we failed to predict the depth of the recession, we did however catch some of its social and financial consequences. Take corporate restructuring. We recognised the scale of the revolution sweeping across the business world and charted the effects on both companies and their employees. Early 1990 saw perhaps the most striking downsizing of any large corporation anywhere in the world: the savage job cuts at IBM. We noted the impact of foreign investment, particularly from Japan, in re-industrialising Britain, and as well as charting the continuing privatisation programme, we also started looking at the introduction of business management techniques in the public sector.

The paper was also cautious about the bullish stories put out by some sections of the business community. This was not just a reaction to high-profile entrepreneurs such as Asil Nadir or the late Robert Maxwell. We were also deeply sceptical of forecasts that the housing slump was over; we were very cautious about the state of the Japanese financial system. On the other hand we did not fall for the excessive gloom surrounding some other sectors. For example we recognised that companies which were deeply out of fashion, such as advertising agencies, would eventually recover, and we suggested that by the middle 1990s London commercial property might again become profitable.

But perhaps the most fascinating thing about looking back on that period is how equity markets coped with disastrous economic circumstances and not lose their collective head. In November 1989, when the boom still seemed in full swing, the FT-SE100 index was at 2,160, and the Dow at 2,646. Sterling was $1.58 (almost exactly where it is now) and DM2.90. Some 18 months later, when both the UK and the US were in recession, the Footsie had managed to pull up to 2,525 and the Dow to 2,995. Sterling in early June 1991 was already up to $1.69 and DM 2.96, and was to touch $2.00 in the following year. If there is a moral here, it is that, left to their own devices, markets can cope with switches from euphoria to despair. During that period at least, equities were correctly cautious about the boom and correctly optimistic about the eventual recovery. It was the currency markets – manipulated by politicians – that got things wrong.

Hamish McRae is now associate editor of the Independent.

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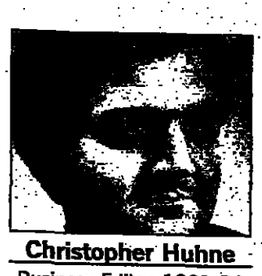
Consequences of the last awful recession are still with us



Christopher Huhne
Business Editor, 1991-94

All recessions are awful, but the recession of 1990 to 1992 and the ejection of the pound from the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) were particularly traumatic for Britain. They gave a boost to British Euroscepticism, and ensured that Britain now looks more isolated than at any time since we joined the European Union.

To understand why that period had such a far-reaching impact, it is important to look beyond the macro-economic figures. Below the surface, this was an unusual recession. It was the first downturn since 1929-31 that affected large parts of middle-class, Middle England. It thus struck at the heart of Conservative support. Since it was politically impossible to admit that the recession was the result largely of domestic policy failings, our ERM membership became the whipping boy for the Thatcherite right.

In reality, the recession was a product of the excesses of the Thatcher-Lawson boom from 1987 to 1989. That boom was fuelled – like those in much of Scandinavia, Japan and the United States – by financial liberalisation and competition. The easy availability of credit pushed up asset prices – most importantly house prices – and made credit even easier to obtain. Rising consumer spending fuelled higher imports and mounting inflation, which exceeded 10 per cent in 1990.

When interest rates began to rise in 1988 to choke off demand, heavily indebted house-buyers bore the brunt of the tightening. Negative equity and repossessions became the bywords of the recession. Consumer spending dipped. The South-east was among the hardest hit regions: unemployment rose sharply even in traditionally middle-class occupations and areas. London, long sheltered from the full force of business cycles, suffered an unemployment rate higher than the national average.

And the newspaper proprietors hated the pattern of the recession too, which is why the attacks on the Government from the newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black had such an edge: advertising revenue is particularly important to broadsheet newspapers, and real revenue plunged, whereas it had gone on rising during the 1979-81 recession, which had affected mainly the manufacturing centres of the Midlands and North and hence the Labour-supporting heartlands.

Ironically, John Major's decision to put the pound into the ERM in October 1990 probably helped at first to moderate the recession. Interest rates had come down from 15 per cent just before we joined to just 10.5 per cent in September 1991 without the exchange rate tremors that usually accompany such a decline. But with rates only 1.25 percentage points higher than Germany's, the question then became whether we could go any lower – or whether we would have to keep rates higher than Germany as a risk premium, since sterling was seen as more inflationary and prone to devaluation.

The French provided the answer in November, when they were forced to raise interest rates to defend their parity despite a better anti-inflationary track record than Britain.

The official line, as stated by the newly promoted Treasury permanent secretary, Sir Terry Burns, on the anniversary of joining, was that there might be a conflict between the interest rates necessary to maintain the exchange rate band and the interest rates needed to conduct monetary policy in a more general sense. But he added: "Experience suggests that does not last for very long typically, nor is it very predictable."

We disagreed: "Ironically, the best news for Europe would now be a sharp slowdown in Germany because the boost from the likely fall in interest rates would outweigh the direct loss of markets. But that does not look likely. The second year of ERM membership may prove less accommodating than the first."

From then on, the pressures for domestic relaxation mounted as house prices fell and commentators played "spot the upturn": CBI surveys came and went. Hopes rose, and hopes were dashed. I put my head on the block by predicting that output would bottom out in the second half of 1991, but the economic indicators showed continued stagnation well into 1992. (This is an object lesson in knowing whether you are forecasting the economy or the official figures: the GDP figures now show that the bottom of the recession was in the first quarter of 1992, and output began to recover in the second quarter despite high interest rates.)

But Germany was still suffering from the after-effects of the reunification boom, and the independent Bundesbank – led by the arch-conservative president, Helmut Schlesinger – was reluctant to cut rates. The rest is history and humiliation.

On 2 June 1992 the Danes voted against Maastricht and the markets' belief that we were on track for monetary union began to crumble. It was not an original thought – the EU Commission had made the point many times – but we warned that it was not obvious that the ERM could survive in its present form unless there was a clear commitment to monetary union:

"Either Maastricht is put back on the road, or the ERM will have to change. Secondly, the resolution of that question spells trouble for the Chancellor in the markets. If there is no hard evidence of lift-off in the autumn, the Chancellor will face renewed pressures for devaluation or even a free-floating pound outside the ERM." One worrying sign was that the yields on gilts were picking up. On 26 August, Norman Lamont popped out of the Treasury – "with all the decorum of a cuckoo clock" – to say that he would not devalue or leave the ERM. The heavy selling began in earnest.

On 3 September, the Government borrowed £7.2bn in foreign currencies to bolster the reserves and buy sterling, but 10 days later the Italian lira succumbed with a devaluation of 3.5 per cent, and the magical belief that the ERM parities were immutable was gone.

The academic and unworldly Mr Schlesinger then committed the unpardonable indiscretion of telling a senior journalist that the Italian realignment would not be the last. The markets knew that the British government had not consulted its partners about the appropriate rate for sterling when it joined, and Mr Schlesinger's remarks were the signal for a rout. On White, Black or Grey Wednesday – depending on your taste – the pound was out of the system despite a 2 per cent rise in base rates, and the announcement of three points more.

And so, by accident rather than design, Britain arrived at a macro-economic policy which is arguably its best for years: an inflation target buttressed by a Bank of England governor with a license to ring the alarm bells; publication of monthly monetary committee minutes and the Bank's inflation report. As the Government cut interest rates and sterling sank, the recovery gathered force led by exports and investment.

However, there has been a high cost. Europe has become a dirty word and Britain looks peculiarly isolated: the other Europeans concluded from currency volatility that monetary union was more important not less. Britain's credibility in the markets is low: they now require the Treasury to pay a premium of 1.6 percentage points on 10-year money, compared with the Germans, because they do not trust us to keep inflation down or avoid devaluation. Even Ireland can borrow more cheaply, with Portugal, Spain and Italy closing in fast.

Robert Maxwell: Many questions remain unanswered in the years since his death

After the ERM débâcle, the focus turned to fiscal policy. Before the election in June 1992, the *Independent* performed a minor public service in a study with Coopers & Lybrand by pointing out that sky-high budget deficits meant taxes were going up whoever won.

In March 1993, the last spring budget, Mr Lamont duly put VAT on fuel, cut mortgage interest relief and increased excises, generally proving the old adage that there is no better diet for a politician than a meal of their own words. Gallup reported that Mr Lamont was the most unpopular Chancellor since the Second World War.

The period was not entirely dominated by macro-economics: one of the sports of the time was to predict which of the stock market stars of the Eighties would fall to earth. Victims included Alan Bond, Asil Nadir, Robert Maxwell, Robert Holmes à Court, George Walker and more. BCCI collapsed and kept official committees going for months. The Lloyd's saga revealed ever more stunning losses.

Gerald Ratner told the Albert Hall that his shops sold crap, and the company had to cut 1,000 jobs. His was one of them. Salomon Bros, one of the top houses of the Eighties, was found to have rigged the US bond market. Peter Clowes was sentenced to 10 years on 18 counts of fraud.

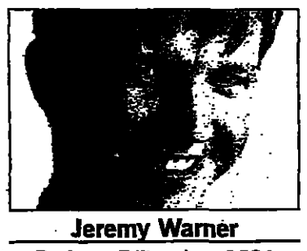
Having made their provisions on Third World debt, the clearing banks found a new way to lose money. Barclays revealed the first loss in its history thanks to lending on property. The man mainly responsible became chairman.

But these were lagging indicators. There were also signs of better times to come. Argentina adopted a currency board system, and crushed its hyperinflation. The Brady debt plan cleared the way for renewed growth in the middle income countries, now fuelled by better policies and capital inflows.

Russia emerged slowly from its Communist hibernation, a giant economy of the future. And China estimated its 1993 growth rate at 13.5 per cent, a figure only slightly less impressive for being published in December, before the year ended. The world was on the mend.

Christopher Huhne is now the managing director of IBCA Sovereign Ratings.

Fat cats, rogue traders and the holy grail



Jeremy Warner
Business Editor since 1994

Fat cats, rogue traders, the death of the mutually owned building society and insurer, utility regulation, merger mania, EMU and most controversial of all, a glimpse (possibly illusory) of that great holy grail of economic management, non-inflationary growth: these are the issues that have dominated the headlines during my two and a half years as Business Editor.

Given Kenneth Clarke's increasingly perilous position in Cabinet, it seems only proper to deal with the last one first. On most conventional measures Mr Clarke's performance as Chancellor has been a remarkable one; unemployment and interest rates have fallen steadily, growth has picked up nicely and inflation has stayed in abeyance. The only apparent blot on the landscape is the Government's inability to get to grips with spending and borrowing, though even here Britain's performance is no worse than anywhere else, possibly a little better.

More questionable is whether Mr Clarke is right to claim it as an economic miracle, the best economic backdrop for a generation. Is this just electioneering, or has Britain indeed broken through to the high ground of economic management, where growth persistently outstrips inflation?

The first thing to point out is that the record only partly bears out what has now become generally accepted as fact. Since Britain left the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) in 1992, growth has risen faster than inflation in only two years, 1994 and 1995. This year inflation will once again be higher than growth. All the same, it is certainly true that the Chancellor has achieved a substantial reduction in unemployment without any notable increase in inflation.

Mr Clarke naturally attributes this happy state of affairs to 17 years of Conservative reform. In particular he points to deregulation of labour and capital markets, and to privatisation. Luck has also played its part, however. The Government has made a virtue out of the collapse of the ERM, but it scarcely needs saying that this was not government policy at the time. Furthermore, it is not just in Britain that inflation is low. Almost everywhere that counts has a low inflation rate at present. Indeed, to believe that the present state of affairs will persist in Britain much beyond the election requires a tremendous leap of faith.

The markets, certainly, are going to take a lot more convincing. After all, the economy at the moment is not so dissimilar to the way it was in the mid-1980s – strong growth and low inflation – and look how that ended. Despite the present bull market in bonds, long-gilt yields continue to reflect quite high medium-term inflationary expectations, and this is without factoring anything in for what the Chancellor might do in the Budget next month to pump-prime the economy for the election.

As it is, Mr Clarke insists he is not going to do very much, to the dismay of Tory backbenchers and some of his Cabinet colleagues. In part this may be a reflection of the Chancellor's pro-European views, another area of policy where he finds himself out on a limb, for it is hard to see how Mr Clarke could both deliver meaningful tax cuts and meet the Maastricht criteria for European Monetary Union (EMU). To the John Redwoods of this world, he therefore becomes a bogeyman twice over. On the one hand he won't cut taxes, a fiscally prudent stance which on the other can in part be laid at the door of nasty European bureaucrats.

As with most important issues, business has been split down the middle by EMU. On the whole big business is for it, with smaller, entrepreneurial business, or anyone that might be adversely affected by the social disciplines of Europe (a minimum wage and the like), against. Until quite recently, it has been possible to avoid the issue, for there was good cause to believe that EMU wouldn't happen at all. In some shape or form, however, it now seems virtually certain it will. In or out, it will profoundly affect all our lives, probably in ways we hardly yet suspect.

Privatisation has been a political hot potato for almost as long as I've been in financial journalism, but during the past two and a half years, regulatory uncertainty, fat cat salaries and questionable standards of service have conspired to make these companies hate institutions. This is in many respects a great shame, for privatisation has brought enormous benefits to Britain.

Moreover, the price-cap form of economic regulation that Britain pioneered for its privatised utilities, has, on the whole, been a great success, bringing rich rewards for both customers and shareholders and hugely improving the efficiency of these one-time state-owned dinosaurs. It has been all too easy to forget these underlying truths in the cut and thrust of more recent debate.

None the less, it is plain from the events of the last few years that the system is no longer working as smoothly as it should. On the one hand regulation is accused of being too lax, as in the case of Professor Stephen Littlechild's review of electricity distribution charges, on the other too harsh, as with Clare Spottiswoode's review of British Gas's TransCo charges. So fundamental was the management and regulatory failure in one case, that of Yorkshire Water, that the company was unable to guarantee supply.

Some degree of reform is clearly required if public confidence in our utilities and in the system that regulates them is to be restored. In so doing, however, it is important that the baby shouldn't be thrown out with the bath water. The windfall tax on utilities proposed by Labour seems to me to be a highly retrogressive step. It is arbitrary, unfair and doesn't address the problem. A formalised system of profit sharing between customers and shareholders would be a rather better approach, though even this is not without its drawbacks.

In the end, however, the best solution may be the simple and undramatic one of institutional reform. Regulators clearly need to be made more accountable, transparent and co-ordinated in their approach. To make them so may require changes in the law.

Whether anything can, or indeed should, be done about fat cat salaries and perks is another question. The privatised utilities have come to symbolise a much wider pattern of corporate excess in Britain. Sir Richard Greenbury's committee on executive pay tried to address the problem and, perhaps predictably given its make-up, utterly failed.

True, executive pay is more transparent than it was, but this seems to have done nothing to shame directors into paying themselves less. Top salaries continue to motor ahead at a pace of knots. Out went the Greenbury incorrect executive share option scheme, in came the Greenbury approved "El Tip" – the surprisingly apt acronym (well nearly, anyway) for the long-term incentive plans which are now a part of every self-respecting executive's pay packet.

Not much in the way of performance is required to hit the jackpot in a great many cases. Most of us don't expect any more than our salaries for doing our jobs. Once in the boardroom, it seems, just getting out of bed in the morning is enough to earn you a big fat bonus on top. Don't you just love being in control?

World capital markets have continued to boom and mushroom throughout the 1990s; derivative markets are now bigger by a factor of many times than the underlying physical markets they piggy back on. Many believe the process to be out of hand and out of control.

The very fabric of the world's financial system is threatened, some believe, by free-wheeling investment bankers and their antics. This may or may not be alarmist nonsense. The test will come during the next big crash.

What is certainly true is that the progressively more complex and global nature of these burgeoning markets has made it much harder for banking supervisors and regulators, as well as the organisations who drive the markets, to keep pace.

One of the effects of this has been the advent of the rogue trader, the consumate and fraudulent gambler who deliberately sets out to hide the extent of his trades from the prying eyes of regulators and superiors. Since I've been Business Editor we have had three notable examples: Nick Leeson at Barings; Yasuo Hamanaka at Sumitomo; and, more recently, Peter Young at Morgan Grenfell.

Though all very different, there is a common theme to these scandals. All have involved varying degrees of failure in management control, supervision and regulation. And although they may all be more symptomatic of negligent management than systemic weakness, they have none the less played a significant role in undermining public confidence in these vast and largely unfettered global markets.

Nick Leeson succeeded only in bringing his bank down, with containable knock-on effects. Who knows? The next one might involve rather more extensive damage.

Headlines that made a splash

From the top:
Mrs Thatcher is approached to join the ERM
The *Independent* leads the field in uncovering the *Guinness scandal*
The stock market crash of 1987
We expose Brent Walker's fraudulent accounts
The *Independent* reveals plans to privatise all 10 water companies at once
Guinness four are jailed
Britain plunges into recession
The Maxwell scandal breaks
Britain is forced out of the ERM
The *Independent* reveals Halifax building society's *plan to merge with the Leeds and float on the* stock market
Merger mania as Glaxo bids for Wellcome
How Barings top brass financed Leeson's rogue trades
Murdoch's 10 years of tax avoidance
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BUSINESS NEWS DESK: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098 CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Car strategy: German parent reveals ambitious plans to take range upmarket and increase production

BMW set for £3bn overhaul at Rover

MICHAEL HARRISON

BMW plans to increase production at its Rover subsidiary by a half to 750,000 cars a year as part of an ambitious £3bn investment programme that will see the model range completely overhauled, slimmed down and moved significantly upmarket.

In his first appearance since taking over as Rover's new chief executive on 1 September, Dr Walter Hasselkus also said that BMW intended to use common engines and electronic systems for both marques and shave at least £350m from their combined annual component expenditure of £14bn.

However, the expansion in car output, which is likely to be accompanied by the building of a £500m engine plant in the West Midlands, will not be matched by a similar increase in Rover's 39,000-strong workforce.

Overall, BMW has set Rover a target of improving cost efficiency by 4 per cent a year and becoming profitable under German accounting rules from 2000 onwards.

Dr Hasselkus, who is also on the main BMW board and formerly ran its motorcycle division, indicated that Rover's car range would be cut from six to three models, while the number of platforms used to build vehicles across the Rover group would be reduced from 11 to seven.

The aim is to complete the overhaul of the model range in 10 years time. BMW has already announced that it will spend £400m on a new Mini, which will also be used as the platform for a replacement for the Rover 100 or Metro as it used to be known.

The Rover 200 and 400 series will be replaced by one model as will the 600 and 800 series, while the MG will remain a distinct platform. Meanwhile Land Rover will expand production through the launch next year of a mini-Land Rover to compete with the likes of Toyota's Rav4.

BMW has already announced investment of £1.5bn in Rover and will spend the same amount again by the end of the decade. Investment is running at £500m a year – double the amount spent by British Aerospace when it owned Rover.

Although Rover will not be in profit for a further four years, Dr Hasselkus defended the huge sums being invested. "BMW is taking a long-term view. We are not short-term thinkers and that means investing heavily for the future. To be where we want to be in 2002 we have to invest."

He added that if it wanted, BMW could get Rover into profit within two years but that would be at the expense of investment in facilities such as engine plants and paintshops.

He also said that German accounting rules, which allowed it to translate currencies at the highest rate and depreciate capital expenditure upfront, made a difference of £200m a year to Rover's published profit and loss figures.

The ambitious model replacement strategy and the high levels of investment mean that the cars Rover will be producing will be significantly more expensive. Dr Hasselkus said that even the new Mini would be an upmarket car with a price tag to match. The present model costs just under £9,000.

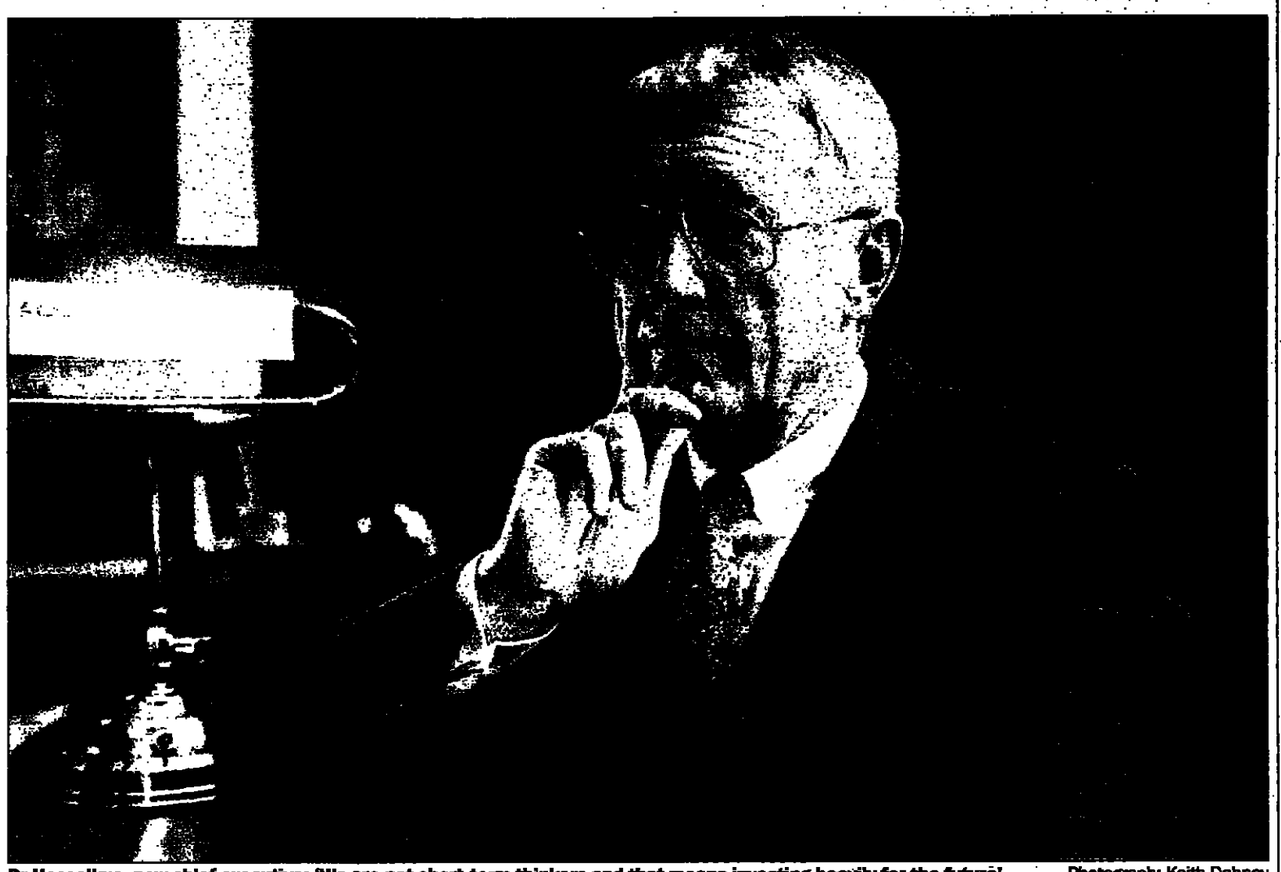
Dr Hasselkus said he was optimistic that the new engine plant would be built at Hams Hill in the West Midlands between Rover's Longbridge and Solihull plants, provided the Government agreed to provide state aid.

The Austrian government, which is also vying for the investment, is prepared to offer £60m in aid and BMW is looking for something similar to site the plant in Britain.

"We are not blackmailing the Government by saying unless you put £50m on the table we will not come to Britain. But there has to be an offer which makes it financially viable for us to come here," he said.

On quality levels he said Rover still had some way to go to match the standards of BMW. "It has improved over the last couple of years but it is still not where we want it to be."

However, he said that was not feasible for some models. "People over at BMW tell me that the Mini should be brought up to BMW quality but I tell them they must have lost their marbles because the Mini is a car that was launched in 1959. There is no comparison."



Dr Hasselkus, new chief executive: 'We are not short-term thinkers and that means investing heavily for the future' Photograph: Keith Dobney

Plasson pulls its London flotation

NIGEL COPE

Plasson, Israel's largest plastics company, pulled its flotation on the London stock market yesterday due to the deterioration in the political situation in the Middle East.

The float was to have raised £20m and would have made Plasson the first Israeli company to take a full listing for almost 30 years. It would also have been the first Kibbutz-owned company to list in London.

The company's brokers, Société Générale Strauss Turnbull, said that although early marketing efforts were successful, the outbreak of violence between Israeli and Palestinian forces meant the company would be unable to proceed with its original timetable.

Investors failed to take up £1.9m of the £20m initial public offering, leaving the company just short of the Stock Exchange's minimum float requirement of 25 per cent of the company's shares. The float would have valued the company at around £75m.

The business of Plasson was founded in 1963 by the Kibbutz Ma'agan Michael, and is located on the coast road between Tel Aviv and Haifa. The Kibbutz is one of the largest in Israel with a population exceeding 1,300. Plasson is a leading maker of plastic connectors for polythene pipes. Last year it made profits of £4.4m on sales of £52m. It is one of Israel's 100 largest companies.

The Kibbutz would have retained a 75 per cent stake in the company after flotation.

C&W steps in to sign up German partner

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Cable & Wireless is to join forces with giant German utility RWE to develop its German telecoms business, the companies announced last night. Preliminary agreement was reached following the collapse of BT's much-vaunted German alliance with RWE, leaving BT to develop a separate strategy in the giant market, scheduled for deregulation from 1998.

Under the agreement, reached in principle yesterday, C&W will own 22.5 per cent of a joint venture, grouping Vebacom, C&W's partnership with Veba, and RWE's telecoms operations. The new group will have a service and network company, operating separately, with RWE contributing net cash of approximately DM2.5bn (£1.05bn).

C&W, which owns the Mercury telecoms company in the UK, would be refunded DM450m, because the alliance would be "substantially overcapitalised" with RWE's involvement, the companies said.

Richard Brown, C&W's chief executive, said: "This transaction underscores the value of our investment in Germany, materially reduces our exposure to start-up costs and will have a favourable impact on our earnings, cash and balance sheet."

BT said that "serious disagreements about strategy" had been behind the decision to end the joint venture plans with RWE. BT will continue to work with telecoms company Viag, its joint-venture partner in Germany, and said the two still planned to apply for the fourth mobile telephone licence announced by the German government, despite RWE's exit.

Explaining the collapse of the RWE-BT alliance, a BT spokesman said: "They wanted separate divisions for mobile and fixed-link networks, while we wanted to bring them together." He said RWE was keen to develop extensive infrastructure, while BT preferred a "service-based company".

He said the German expansion plans, which are seen as key to BT's global aspirations, would not cost more as a result of the collapse of the RWE joint venture. BT will step up plans to win access to fixed-transmission capacity in Germany.

BT said it would leave the door open to other potential partners to join with it and Viag. "It has always been our intention to bring in another partner," the spokesman said.

Under the complicated C&W-RWE deal, C&W will retain its 45 per cent interest in Vebacom, its joint venture with Veba. The network and services operation of Vebacom and those of RWE, called Rwecom, will be combined into two companies, one covering services and the other networks. Vebacom will have a 51 per cent shareholding in the services company and 49 per cent of the network company. In addition, Veba will take a 25 per cent interest in Rwecom.

Oftel to look at BT's satellite scheme

Oftel, the telecoms regulator, has asked BT and Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB to provide details of their joint marketing of satellite and telephone services, following a complaint from General Cable, the telecoms operator, *writes Mathew Horsman*.

"We have received a complaint, and we have asked BT to provide details of the arrangements," an Oftel spokeswoman said yesterday.

The complaint, which is supported by at least two other cable companies, follows the announcement last month of a scheme to give satellite dish subscribers £3.30 worth of free telephone calls a month, supplied by BT, and to provide cheaper installation charges and monthly subscription rates to Sky subscribers for a limited time. The arrangement was an extension of schemes offered by BT and BSkyB, and is seen by some cable companies as unfair competition.

But at least two large cable companies were said to be "relaxed" about the schemes, with one saying: "This is just a form of marketing, and is no different, really, from what we do."

Cable operators offer combined television and telephony packages to attract new subscribers.

BT said it was unsurprised by the complaint, but stressed the scheme conformed with all aspects of its licence. "The country's leading telecoms operator and the most profitable broadcaster will always attract this sort of interest," a BT spokesman said.

British Energy under fire over 1,400 job cuts

MICHAEL HARRISON

British Energy, the newly privatised nuclear generator, was facing a storm of criticism last night as it confirmed that it is to cut 1,460 jobs just three months after its stock market flotation.

The redundancies, to be phased in over the next three years, will reduce staff levels by a quarter to 4,800. More than half of them will be among operating staff at British Energy's eight nuclear reactors. The remainder will be among administrative and support staff. The company has not ruled out compulsory redundancies.

John Battle, Labour's energy and industry spokesman, called on the President of the Board of Trade, Ian Lang, to apologise at the Conservative Party conference for the privatisation of British Energy. "Today we are seeing 1,460 employees lose their jobs as managers seek to make ends meet in the privatisation that never added up. This privatisation has been a short-term, desperate dash for cash to fund Tory tax cuts and we have all been the losers. Ian Lang must use his chance to say sorry."

Mike Jeram, head of energy at the white-collar union Unison said British Energy's staff were fed up being treated as "dividend fodder" and warned that the public would want to know how the cutbacks would affect the future of the company's nuclear reactors.

But a British Energy spokeswoman said there was no question of safety standards being compromised. She added that most of the job cuts were, in fact, part of a rationalisation programme announced in 1994 and then put on hold following the Government's decision to split the nuclear industry in two and privatise the more modern advanced gas cooled reactor and the Sizewell PWR.

Of the 1,460 job losses, 800 will be among operating staff and 660 will be in support staff. The average number of operating staff per station will fall by 100 or roughly one-fifth. There will be 1,200 job losses in England and Wales and 260 in Scotland. British Energy's Barnwood administrative centre in Gloucestershire will be the hardest-hit site with 450 redundancies.

British Energy estimated savings of £50m. The one-off cost of the restructuring will be £100m which is fully covered by existing provisions.

Discussions have started with the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate about the operational aspects of the job cuts. A spokeswoman said they were far less draconian than those implemented following earlier privatisations of electricity generators.

British Energy said it had no current plans to build new stations in Britain, nuclear, gas or otherwise.

Tebitt tells court of 'ageism'

Tebbit: Said it was difficult for people over 55 to find work

MIKE TAYLOR
Press Association

Lord Tebbit, who once told the unemployed to get on their bikes and find work, said in the High Court yesterday that a "cult of ageism" in Britain was making it difficult for top executives over the age of 55 to find work.

"I suffer from it myself, being 65," he told the court. "It isn't fashionable these days to appoint chief executives who are in their upper 50s."

The former Conservative Party chairman was giving evidence for corporate troubleshooter John Clark in his £3m compensation claim for loss of his post as chief executive of business services group BET after it was taken over by Rentokil.

Mr Clark says he will have serious difficulty in finding a new job, but Rentokil argues than an executive of his standing should be able to secure another post and that he is bound to "mitigate his own loss" by seeking to do so.

Rentokil's counsel, Andrew Hogarth, who recalled that Lord Tebbit had held himself out in the past as "a bit of an expert on the ease with which you can obtain employment", suggested that Mr Clark would seem to be an obvious candidate for employment.

Lord Tebbit, a non-executive director of BET until May this year, replied: "He is 55 years old and unfortunately there is a cult of ageism in this country."

Another barrier in Mr Clark's way was that many able chief executives were not suitable for positions in other companies. "There are some very good square pegs and some very good round holes," he said.

Responding to Mr Hogarth's suggestion that Mr Clark had influential friends who could recommend his ability to others, Mr Clark's counsel, Brian Langstaff QC, asked Lord Tebbit whether there was an "old school tie culture" in the world of commerce.

Lord Tebbit said: "Very little indeed. One assesses people on their work. Their reputation is normally public. There is not an old school network of people fixing jobs at cocktail parties and dinner parties."

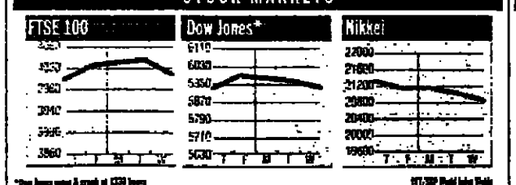
American-born Mr Clark turned round the ailing fortunes of BET before it was acquired by Rentokil for £2.2bn last April in a hostile takeover. He is claiming more than £3m for loss of salary, pension rights, stock and share options, bonus payments, an executive car and chauffeur, and health insurance.

Rentokil admits wrongful dismissal and agrees it must compensate him. But it disputes how much, arguing that he was offered same "fair" terms as other former BET directors, all of whom accepted the offer.

Lord Tebbit told Mr Justice Timothy Walker that, after the takeover, Rentokil "demanded" termination of Mr Clark's service agreements and his removal from office. There had been no consultation with the BET board. BET directors agreed that this was not the correct way to deal with Mr Clark, who had "given his all to BET".

The case continues today.

STOCK MARKETS

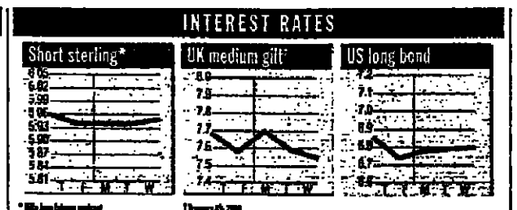


Indices

Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996 High	1996 Low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	4009.30	-26.30	-0.7	4035.60	3632.30	3.88
FTSE 250	4431.30	-4.00	-0.1	4668.60	4015.30	3.45
FTSE 350	1995.40	-10.70	-0.5	2006.10	1816.60	3.79
FT Small Cap	2177.32	+0.10	+0.0	2244.36	1954.06	3.12
FT All Share	1969.07	-9.75	-0.5	1978.82	1791.95	3.74
New York *	5936.95	-29.82	-0.5	5993.86	5032.94	2.15
Tokyo	20870.83	-167.70	-0.8	22666.80	19734.70	0.76†
Hong Kong	12250.57	+143.81	+1.2	12250.57	10204.87	3.42†
Frankfurt	2702.99	+11.82	+0.4	2702.99	2253.36	1.72†

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES



Money Market Rates / Bond Yields *

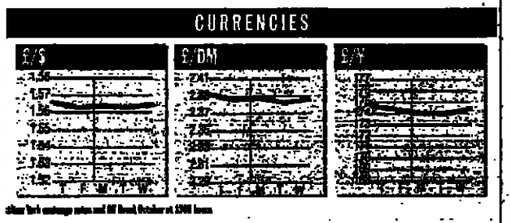
Index	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Bond (%)	Year Ago	Long Bond	(%) Year Ago
UK	5.81	6.19	7.36	8.16	7.50	8.26
US	5.44	5.75	6.49	6.09	6.79	6.44
Japan	0.50	0.63	2.74	2.78	-	-
Germany	3.06	3.16	5.97	6.60	6.81	-

*Benchmark indices

MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price (p)	Change (p)	Change%	Falls	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change
CMG	770	30	4.1	Eurotunnel Plc/se	93.5	11.5	11.0
Cookson Group	252.5	8.5	3.5	Danka Busi Svs	627.5	35	5.3
Albert Fisher Grp	40.8	1.3	3.2	Rexam	373	12	3.1

CURRENCIES



Pound

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
$ (London)	1.5645	+0.13c	1.5720
$ (N York)‡	1.5650	+0.20c	1.5731
DM (London)	2.3913	+0.41pf	2.2415
¥ (London)	174.418	+Y0.473	158.655
£ Index	97.1	+0.2	84.5

Dollar

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
£ (London)	0.6392	-0.05	0.6361
£ (N York)‡	0.6390	-0.08	0.6357
DM (London)	1.5285	+0.13pf	1.4249
¥ (London)	111.485	+Y0.21	100.855
$ Index	97.4	+0.1	93.6

OTHER INDICATORS

	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago
Oil Brent $	24.58	+0.48	16.07
Gold $	381.50	+0.50	384.85
Gold £	243.84	+0.11	244.68

	Index	Latest	Yr Ago	Next Figs
RPI	153.1	+2.1pc	149.9	10 Oct
GDP	108.1	+2.27pc	105.7	25 Oct
Base Rates	—	5.75pc	6.75	—

Beck's
mediocrity
WARNING.
See tomorrow's paper

هكذا من الأصل

Ultimate task may prove too much for BMW

COMMENT

'If you think the current Mini is expensive at a shade under £9,000, just wait until you see the new version for the next millennium. The one thing that Rover's customers are not used to is paying top prices for their cars'

Strange things happen to the profits of British companies when they are piped through the German accounting system. Just ask Rover which, to its bemusement, saw a £92m operating profit turn into a £148m loss last year.

Well here's another set of whacky figures to get your mind around from the same folk who brought you Rover's disappearing profits act. BMW, which paid £800m for Rover in an uncharacteristic display of largesse two years ago, wants to increase production at its British subsidiary from 500,000 to 750,000 over the next four years without taking on a single extra fitter. As if that wasn't enough, it also wants to build a plant in the West Midlands that will churn out 400,000 engines a year for the car that will replace the Rover 600 and 800 series.

Even supposing that some staff are transferred from building engines to the more labour intensive business of bolting together cars, that still suggests a productivity leap of 40-50 per cent. Er, not quite, says Dr Walter Hasselkus, who has just cruised over from Berlin on his BMW1000 motor cycle to take charge at Longbridge. The figure he has in mind for efficiency savings is more like 4 per cent a year. That, according to BMW, would still be world-class but it is a far cry from the improvements implied by its ambitious production targets.

The discrepancy can be explained by the mountain of cash that BMW intends to throw at the old dog to get Rover where it wants it to be in the next decade. The Germans plan to spend a cool £3bn on Rover before they see a single penny in profit back.

The ultimate driving machine has taken on the ultimate task. It plans to replace the entire product line-up and cut the number of basic platforms that Rover and Land Rover use from 11 to seven while overhauling quality standards so that the doors close with a chunk not a clink.

If BMW is ever to make decent profits on such colossal investment it can only mean one thing – that the price of a Rover will start to march smartly upwards. If you think the current Mini is expensive at a shade under £9,000 just wait until you see the new version for the next millennium. The one thing that Rover's customers are not used to is paying top prices for their cars. Convincing them otherwise will be almost as hard a task as knocking Longbridge and Cowley into shape. Certainly it is going to take all BMW's legendary marketing skills.

Clarke fights to keep hand on the tiller

Only the none-too-distant noise of knives being sharpened will disturb Kenneth Clarke today as he stands up at the Conservative Party conference to stake his claim to being the best Chancellor for a generation. Steady growth, low inflation, the lowest mortgage rates for more than 30 years, room for modest tax cuts in November and, what is more, the Government's books can still be made to balance by the turn of the century, according to yesterday's Green Budget from the Institute for Fiscal Studies and Goldman Sachs. He can have it all.

Or can he? Minutes of his meeting with Eddie George a month ago reveal the Governor to be steadily arming himself to argue for an increase in interest rates. Mr George has upgraded his warning from "risks to the inflation target probably on the upside" in June's minutes (when he argued against the last quarter-point cut in base rates) to "significant risk to the inflation target".

The IFS's Green Budget, still by far the best of the curtain-raising tomes traditionally published ahead of the real thing, warns that achieving the Government borrowing targets depends crucially on successful control of public spending. Mr Clarke has conformed with his spending plans for the past three years (no mean feat this), but it becomes much tougher from here on in. Moreover, the Green Budget assumptions on tax receipts rely on growth in GDP staying above the long-term average for the next five years without triggering inflation. You have to be a hopeless optimist to believe either of these two things will happen in practice.

What's more, the Chancellor's success in negotiating these obstacles – and, let's be fair, he has steered well so far – is under unusually intense scrutiny by the financial markets. For this he can thank the Tory equivalent of Labour's loony left in the early 1980s, the disturbingly large group of Conservatives who think the way to win the election is to burn bridges with Europe and slash and burn taxes and spending. Their influence negates the credit the Chancellor gets for his steady hand on the macro-economic tiller. As far as the markets are concerned, Britain has the best performing economy in Europe, but it also contains the greatest political risk, too.

British Energy runs flat out to stand still

The fact that British Energy is getting rid of almost a quarter of its staff should not prompt people living near its power stations to decamp to safer places, or at least not yet. Though a nuclear station is a more delicate animal than a coal or oil fired one, and needs tender loving care 24 hours a day, the job reductions confirmed yesterday are not going to leave the station control panels unmanned.

Indeed, the proposals are modest compared with what happened among the privatised fossil fuel generators. National Power found it could dispense with the services of 70 per cent of its pre-privatisation staff, and PowerGen not much less. It was this unexpectedly high scope for efficiency gain that made the generators, and their regional distribution sister companies, into such unbridled cash machines. They have proved far more valuable than the City dreamed when they were first privatised. British Energy is different. Its plants need to run flat out all the time to be economic. As a consequence, the scope for further improvements in efficiency are less pronounced.

With this latest package, British Energy is probably going about as far as it properly can. The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, the safety body, would certainly look with suspicion at any further inroads into staffing levels. So if British Energy cannot employ the slash-and-burn tactics of the rest of the industry to increase shareholder returns, what can on earth can it do once the present programme has run its course?

Hopes of building another pressurised water reactor power station had to be abandoned ahead of the privatisation; the economics of these things were so ludicrous that they would not have stood up to examination in the prospectus. At one stage there was a grand plan for expansion into gas fired power stations, but we have more than enough of those already in Britain so that strategy has fallen by the wayside. Indeed, there are no current plans for British Energy to do anything at all in the UK off its own bat. Joint ventures seem to be the name of the game.

The shares, at 108p, stand 3p above the privatisation price – an acknowledgement of what a pariah stock this remains. This is a company whose expertise is the management of decline, for unless things change dramatically, these powers stations will never be replaced.

Tighter spending 'will pay for tax cuts'

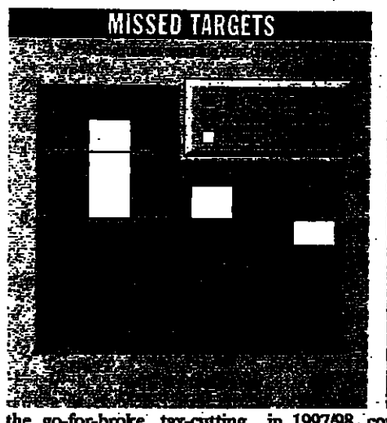
DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

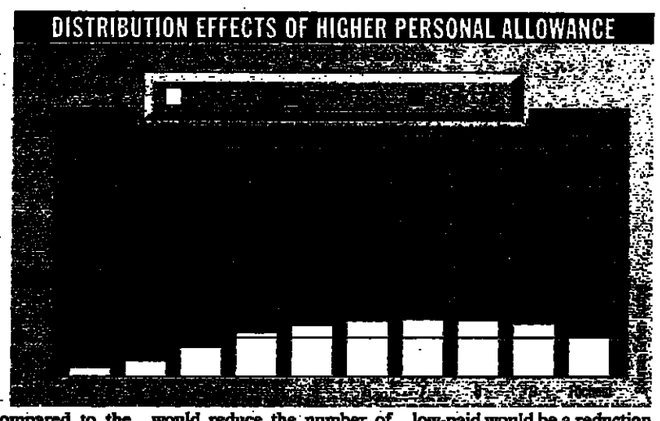
Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, should not cut taxes in next month's Budget, but probably will. Even so, he will be able to publish plans showing the Government's budget balancing at the turn of the century by pencilling in spending cuts, according to an independent analysis published yesterday.

The respected annual *Green Budget* by the Institute for Fiscal Studies and investment bank Goldman Sachs predicts tax cuts worth £3bn, equivalent to 2p off the basic rate of income tax, and the same size as last year's giveaway.

"We do not recommend tax cuts but we expect them," said Gavyn Davies, chief economist at Goldman Sachs. He said tax cuts would not jeopardise the Chancellor's aim of achieving budget balance by 2000 because they would be paid for by further cuts in planned spending. The key question would be whether the Government could hit its spending targets.

Mr Davies said: "This is not the go-for-broke, tax-cutting package that the right wing of the Conservative Party would like to see."





The *Green Budget* forecasts show a similar profile for future public borrowing to the Treasury's latest forecasts, regardless of which party wins the General Election. In fact, its figures are more optimistic, putting the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement at £26bn in the current financial year and £21.5bn in 1997/98, compared to the £26.9bn and £23.1bn in the Treasury's Summer Forecast.

It assumes there will be a reduction in income tax equivalent to 2p off the basic rate but possibly taking the form of an increase in tax allowances or widening of the lower-rate tax band instead.

Of the three options, raising the personal allowance helps the poorest income groups the most. An increase of £175 would reduce the number of taxpayers by 500,000. A reduction in the basic rate is least helpful to the low income groups.

Shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown's proposal for a 10p lower rate of income tax would be of greater value to poorer households than a reduction in the basic rate, according to the *Green Budget*, although still not as effective as a higher personal allowance. Best of all for the low-paid would be a reduction in VAT.

Dramatic changes in corporate taxation are unlikely this Budget, beyond further steps to close tax loopholes, the report argues. The IFS warned investors to watch out for a reduction in Advance Corporation Tax if the lower rate of income tax falls, because a lower ACT rate raises revenue from tax-exempt and top-rate shareholders.

It also expects higher vehicle excise duty and a rationalisation of alcohol duties to bring tax on spirits closer into line with duties on wine and beer.

The *Green Budget* recommends a phased abolition of profit-related pay. "Tax relief on PRP schemes should never have been allowed to get out of hand in the way it has," it says.

The outlook for the public finances depends on economic growth and inflation as well as the Government's tax and spending plans. The *Green Budget* forecasts inflation staying at 2 to 3 per cent and GDP growth of 3.5 per cent in 1997, falling to a still-buoyant 2.8 per cent thereafter. Healthy growth should help tax revenues.

However, yesterday's document raised questions over the Government's ability to meet tough spending targets. Low inflation means that public expenditure has grown faster than planned in real terms.

The *Green Budget* predicts there will not be any pressure on public sector pay after the election, as long as numbers employed in the public sector continue to fall. The continuation of the private finance initiative will allow public sector investment spending to shrink further.

It scotches the myth that local authorities have a pot of accumulated capital receipts from council house sales to spend. The receipts have either been spent on investment projects or used to build up local authorities' financial assets, reducing past PSBRs in either case.

The difficulty on the public spending front is the longer term one of pressures on the social security, health and education budgets. These three account for almost 60 per cent of total expenditure, and their share has risen steadily at the expense of other areas.

Economic view, page 28

Ken and Eddie move further apart on rates

Kenneth Clarke and Eddie George, the two titans of economic policy, moved further apart on interest rates when they met a month ago, writes Diane Coyle.

Although the gap between them was only a quarter of a percentage point, Mr George emphasised the "significant" risk to the inflation target if base rates did not go up by that much soon, while Mr Clarke insisted that there was no sign yet of inflationary pressures.

According to minutes of their meeting on 4 September, published yesterday, the Governor said the short-term outlook for prices was favourable but demand was trending up. "That pointed to inflation picking up again in the course of next year, putting the inflation target at significant risk in 1998," he argued.

Economists read much significance into that "significant". "The Bank is girding itself up to recommend in no uncertain terms that rates be raised," said Geoff Dicks at NatWest Markets. He said this could be expected by the time it published its next Inflation Report on 6 November.

Mr George said the Bank would prefer a "marginally tighter" policy now and warned that the longer the delay, the bigger the increase that would be needed.

However, the Chancellor replied that there were no signs of unsustainably fast growth. He added that there was "certainly no sign of any housing market boom". The minutes record that, in a piece of creative interpretation of Mr George's remarks, "he was inclined to agree with the Governor that there was no case for moving interest rates in either direction on this occasion".

City analysts still reckon there is little chance that Mr Clarke will put up the cost of borrowing before the election, although almost all think the next chancellor will have to bite the bullet.

The economic evidence will continue to be mixed, as indicated by this week's figures showing flat manufacturing output in the first eight months of the year. The figures will not all be pointing in the same direction for some time.

However, the shape of the Budget and the strength of sterling are likely to influence the Bank of England's view. The pound has gained 1.5 per cent in value since the 4 September meeting, which will have the same effect as a small rise in interest rates if it is sustained. A cautious Budget would also allow Mr George to keep his powder dry.

Sir Colin Marshall: Focusing on distribution activities

Inchcape sells ITS for £380m

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Inchcape sold its Testing Services business to Charterhouse Development Capital yesterday for about £100m more than analysts' original expectations. The £380m price tag secured by the new managing director, Philip Cushing, will make a big dent in the distribution group's debts, which stood at £463m at the end of last year.

Inchcape's shares, one of the market's worst performers in recent years, closed 8p higher at 276p. Despite the rise, they remain less than half the 625p at which they peaked in March 1993 before the strength of the yen hit the competitiveness of its core motor distribution operations.

Sir Colin Marshall, chairman, said a profit of about £180m would be struck on the sale, which he said was "consistent with the strategy we announced in March, and is a major step towards focusing Inchcape as an international distribution group".

Inchcape said at the time of its full-year figures in March that it would focus on its distribution activities, which include motor trading, soft drink bottling and the distribution of consumer and industrial products and office equipment.

ITS is one of the world's largest non-automotive testing organisations, operating 175 testing laboratories and 342 offices in more than 80 countries. It provides testing services in product quality and conformity testing, commodities testing and minerals and environmental testing. In the year to December 1995, ITS made operating profits before exceptionals of £27.8m from sales of £248.1m. It had a book value of about £35m.

When the price achieved for ITS was rumoured analysts were amazed that a venture capital group had paid such a full price.

IN BRIEF

• **Investec Bank of South Africa** is in advanced negotiations to buy Carr Sheppards, one of the City's leading private client stockbrokers, from Banque Indosuez. Carr Sheppards, which focuses on portfolio management for private clients, charities and pension funds, has been looking for a buyer since Banque Indosuez reviewed its strategy last year and decided to concentrate on its core business. "There was no shortage of interest which meant that the selection process was long and involved," said Fred Carr, chief executive of Carr Sheppards, which will continue to operate as a separate entity under the terms of the deal. Indosuez and Investec hope to conclude the deal by December.

• **Stagecoach**, the Perth-based bus operator, yesterday claimed a first in completing the securitisation of £545m of debt associated with its controversial takeover of the Porterbrook rail leasing company. Although the group will keep the debts on its balance sheet, there will be no recourse to Stagecoach, which will bear an average fixed cost of around 7.4 per cent on the funds raised. The main securitisation vehicle has issued £443m of triple-A rated bonds backed by Government-guaranteed leasing revenues payable by Porterbrook's 16 train operating company customers. Earlier this year, Nomura used securitised debt to buy Angel Train Contracts, a rival rail leasing group.

Investment column, page 26

• **Lloyds Chemists**, subject of rival £600m takeover offers earlier this year, blamed uncertainty created by the bids for a fall in profits from £55.6m to £47m in the year to June. However, the group remains optimistic that Gehe, the German group, and rivals UniChem will be cleared to rebid by next Friday's deadline, set by the competition authorities following a Monopolies and Mergers Commission inquiry. Hit by staff defections caused by low morale, the wholesaling business saw profits slip by £2.8m to £13.2m. The bid uncertainty has also slowed the conversion of the Drugstore chain to a new health and beauty format.

• **The Radio Authority** yesterday announced it would seek applications for three new regional commercial radio licences in the North-west, the North-east and in Central Scotland. It also expects to advertise a national digital radio multiplex during the fourth quarter of 1997.

• **Deutsche Telekom** said more than 2.5 million people had expressed interest in buying shares in the company when the first tranche is floated in November. Retail investors have until 11 October to register with the company for special incentives, including price discounts on shares purchased. "Demand is exceeding all expectations," the company said. Since the beginning of the week, it has had to double the number of people handling investor inquiries. The company was receiving 70,000 calls an hour, it said.

Murdoch set to take row over Fox to court

DAVID USBORNE
New York

Rupert Murdoch was expected last night to file a lawsuit in a New York federal court against Time Warner in an increasingly bitter and public spat over cable access for his Fox TV 24-hour news channel, which was launched this week.

The court action was the latest development in a clash involving some of the world's biggest media titans – Mr Murdoch himself, Gerald Levin, the chairman of Time Warner, and Ted Turner. The final merger between Time Warner and Turner Broadcasting is set to be approved by shareholders today.

The drama, which last month spurred Mr Turner to compare Mr Murdoch to Adolph Hitler, has also drawn in almost the entire political establishment of New York state. Republican leaders – notably New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Governor George Pataki – have weighed in to support Mr Murdoch.

Mr Murdoch's News Corp, which owns Fox TV, is accusing Time Warner of reneging on an agreement to provide space for its all-news channel on Time Warner's cable system in New York City. Time Warner ended negotiations with Fox last week and opted to carry only Mr Turner's CNN, the market leader, and another entrant to all-day news, MSNBC, a joint venture between NBC and Microsoft.

The lawsuit, which was to be filed before the end of business yesterday, is believed to accuse Time Warner of violating anti-trust laws by spurning Fox. It will seek an injunction against the completion of its merger with Turner Broadcasting and is also said to seek financial compensation. Most observers believe that to survive the Fox channel must be seen in New York.

"We know we had an agreement," Arthur Siskind, the lawyer representing Fox said. "There are documents that reflect all the material terms in the agreement". A condition of the federal approval of Time Warner's merger with Turner was that its cable system should carry at least one other news alternative to Turner's CNN.

In a statement of its own, Fox added that the lawsuit would allege that a "conspiracy has taken place prior to the still-to-be consummated merger" to freeze Fox out of the Time Warner cable network.

"The lawsuit is utter foolishness," Richard Parsons, president of Time Warner, said through a spokesman.

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DATED THIS 30th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 1996.

By order of the Board

P. K. Adkins
(Director)

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Stagecoach offers an exciting ride

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

Stagecoach has cut a dash in the world of privatised bus groups, and not just because of the orange jackets sported by its executive chairman, Brian Souter. The Perth-based group spotted early on the huge profits to be made from buying up, rationalising and re-integrating parts of the former nationalised and municipal bus groups. The results have been reflected in a share price which has outperformed the rest of the market by around 270 per cent since flotation in April 1993. Yesterday's innovative repackaging of £545m of leasing assets taken on with the Porterbrook rolling stock company is part of the group's attempt to repeat its success with the rail industry.

Assuming the regulatory authorities do not put a stop to Mr Souter's ambitions, the potential is huge. Earlier this year Stagecoach paid a nominal sum for South West Trains. Yet by 1999, on the estimations of the company's own broker, UBS, that seven-year franchise could be chipping in profits of £21m. But even that pales into insignificance besides Porterbrook. That £825m deal, part-financed by July's £111m rights issue at 410p, could be bringing in operating profits of £97m by the end of the century, or 38 per cent of the group total, according to UBS. With deals like these, it is not hard to see why Stagecoach has tendered for the other 12 train operating companies still to be offered for sale.

Yesterday's securitisation clears the balance sheet for more deals. As the table shows, the group's hunger for acquisitions has sent debts soaring. The combination of Porterbrook and last month's £233m acquisition of Swebus, the Scandinavian bus operator, would have sent gearing to a stratospheric 600 per cent. After securitisation, debts with recourse to Stagecoach will only be equivalent to gearing of somewhat over 200 per cent.

Bankers are apparently happy to continue to finance Stagecoach, but future deals are more likely to be outside the group's traditional areas. The top five bus operators are estimated to control 70 per cent of the market. The scarcity of acquisition targets means prices have been rising and the urban operators, more insulated from the general fall in bus travel, are likely to command high premiums.

Stagecoach is still a long way from relying solely on its declining markets for future growth. The danger is rather that the group's management will be stretched beyond breaking point.

Profits could be anywhere from £90m to £106m this year, putting the shares, down 8p at 569.5p, on a forward multiple of between 16 and 18. Compared to an earnings growth rate of more than 30 per cent that still looks good value, but there are risks as well, not least of which would be a Labour government unfriendly towards rail privatisation.

Austin Reed tailors its look

Austin Reed has done well to bounce back from the disaster of 1995/96 when the men's and women's clothes retailer paid the price for ditching its classic women's business suits in favour of a less structured, casual look. The spring and autumn ranges were spurned by customers forcing two profits warnings and an eventual halving in the group's pre-tax profits to £3.4m.

Given womenswear only accounts for 20 per cent of group sales and profits, the impact was surprisingly severe.

But chief executive Chris Thomson has moved quickly to put the company back on track. The classic, more tailored look in womenswear has been restored and new management brought in. The result is a much more focused approach with a stricter attitude to costs.

The benefits are starting to show with a jump in pre-tax profits from £1.7m to £2.6m in the six months to August. Sales in the 46 shops were up by 8 per cent during the half and 9 per cent in the three months since.

With more focus on stock control there have been fewer mark downs and better margins. There are plans for three more stores but management's main priority is not to expand but consolidate what they've got.

Profits at the manufacturing division were flat but the factory has been completely overhauled and is winning new business. Licensing income was also static at £1.4m though new deals have been signed in South-east Asia.

Like Moss Bros earlier this week, Austin Reed looks well placed to benefit from the consumer upturn as well as the popularity of classic tailoring. But it has to get the products right. The real change seems to be the new management which has brought a breath of fresh air to this near 100-year-old company.

Mr Thomson says last year was a blip. The shares have certainly traded erratically in the last two years, bungee-jumping between 160p and 240p. They closed up 5p to 219.5p yesterday. With NatWest forecasting full-year profits of £5.8m, the shares trade on a forward rating of 18. Given the prospects, they are worth holding.

Country Casuals stays in the red

For much of the past year, Country Casuals shareholders have had few regrets about turning down former chairman John Shannon's opportunistic 140p-a-share bid for their company. The shares reached 179p at one point in the spring.

It has been pretty much downhill all the way since then, however, and yesterday, after disappointing interim figures, they dipped below the offer price for the first time, closing 19p lower at 136.5p. Anyone who has stood by the company has paid a considerable opportunity cost.

Of the company's three divisions, two had a poor first half, so although the interim loss was reduced from £1.04m to £812,000, the company remains in familiar red territory. Analysts' forecasts of about £3.5m profit in the year to next January were yesterday reined in to £2.4m.

The core Country Casuals brand never really managed to recover from a weak first quarter and like-for-like sales were flat in the first half. Worse, because much of that turnover was struck in July during the summer sale, gross margins fell from 60 to 57 per cent. As a result, interim profits were a third lower at £236,000.

The other duff area was Lerose, the manufacturing arm, where sharply reduced demand from one customer led to a rise in the first-half loss from £145,000 to £365,000.

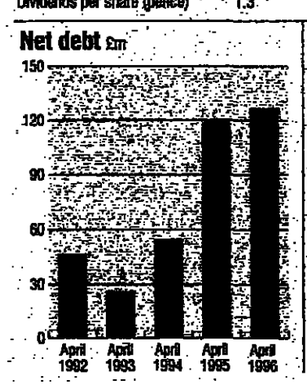
Elvi, the outsize clothes specialist saw year-on-year growth of 19 per cent and a rise in the gross margin but the aftermath of a heavy store-closure programme persists and despite a reduction, the loss was still a sizeable £700,000 (loss of £1.3m).

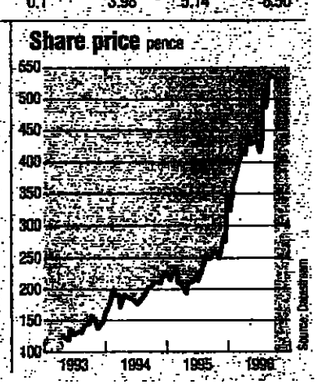
An increase in the interim dividend from 1.4p to 1.7p was designed to signal confidence in the future, and analysts still expect good growth next year, but until there is more concrete evidence of recovery the shares, on a forward p/e of 16, are high enough.

STAGECOACH : AT A GLANCE

Market value: £1.36bn, share price 569.5p

Five year record	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Turnover (£m)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Pre-tax profits (£m)	8.24	13.0	18.9	32.6	43.6
Earnings per share (pence)	5.8	9.1	10.0	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dividends per share (pence)	1.3	0.1	3.98	5.14	6.50





Journalists behaving badly in the Bahamas

PEOPLE & BUSINESS

News just in: "*Men Behaving Badly* magazine has launched a new magazine called *Millennium Man Monthly*, which is failing miserably to take off. Supporting the launch of the magazine and keeping it on the news-stands has meant that *Men Behaving Badly* magazine is now in severe financial difficulty."

For those of you, like me, who had never heard of such a magazine, only the TV show, the explanation is that this is part of a fictional scenario put together by the Society of Practitioners of Insolvency (the people who wind companies up).

The idea is to invite a number of journalists along, yours truly included, to play out a "business rescue game" to see how receivers do their stuff first hand. SPI wants to show that receivers spend as much time rescuing insolvent businesses as burying them.

Colin Bird, senior corporate recovery partner at Price Waterhouse, will oversee the game. **Simon Freakley**, managing partner at accountants Buchler Phillips, will play the insolvency practitioner and **Stephen Gale**, a partner at law firm Hammond Suddards, will rule on what is legal and what is not.

"Should you choose to accept this invitation, you and other journalists will be playing key roles in the scenario," says SPI. Sounds great. I think I'll be the businessman who legs it to the Bahamas with the loot.

A missive reaches me from the Corporation of London: "Lord Mayor's Show welcomes Britain's Olympic heroes."

To which one might respond, if one were being churlish; "Sounds like a pretty small show, then."

Which would be unfair. This year's parade through the streets of the City on 9 November will cost £3m. Our only gold medal winners from Atlanta, oarsmen Steven Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent, will be in the parade as part of the Port of London's entry.

Uncertain future: Will 'Men Behaving Badly' be wound up?

Also parading will be the next Lord Mayor of London, **Alderman Roger Cork**, who will will take over from **Sir John Chalstrey** on the Friday before the show.

Ald Cork is following in his father, **Sir Kenneth Cork**'s footsteps. Sir Kenneth, who was Lord Mayor in 1978-9, virtually invented the modern profession of insolvency and wound up the old Rolls Royce company in the 1970s. He also founded the Cork Gully receivership firm, now owned by Coopers & Lybrand, where Ald Cork spent 25 years also as an insolvency practitioner.

Ald Cork is now a partner with Moore Stephens. His business colleagues in the Corporation will no doubt be on their best behaviour, lest he liquidates them.

Gavyn Davies, Goldman Sachs's economics guru and adviser to the Labour Party, as well as columnist for this newspaper, was at the shindig yesterday to launch the *Green Budget*, which is produced each year by the Institute of Financial Studies. **Gordon Brown**, shadow chancellor, has promised a "proper" green budget when Labour sweeps to victory.

Which raises a delicate problem – will Mr Brown be willing to contract out Labour's green budget to the obvious candidate, Mr Davies? Or will he do it himself? Watch this space.

A galaxy of City worthies is off to Greece in a fortnight's time to run a marathon for charity on the original path between Marathon and Athens used by Pheidippides in 490BC to report the defeat of the invading Persians.

The Athens Centenary Marathon is being organised by **John Campbell**, managing director and co-founder of Campbell Lutyens, a corporate finance boutique.

"It will mark the centenary of the first modern Olympic Games in Athens," he says.

Among the runners is the founder of *The Independent*, **Andreas Whittam Smith**, a keen runner who has not yet run a marathon. "I'll be jogging a mixture of running and walking," he says modestly.

John Willcock

THE INDEPENDENT F1 RACING

PLAY FORMULA 1 DREAM TEAM

WIN a drive in a grand prix car

Today is the final day that you can enter for Formula 1 Dream Team. Register today for the Japanese Grand Prix and you stand the chance of winning a day out testing with the Tyrrell team.

Throughout the season we have offered prizes to the winning Dream Team in each individual grand prix. The champion of our Formula 1 Dream Team game for the whole 1996 grand prix season will win our overall prize, a drive in a Formula One car.

Your team must comprise three drivers, a chassis and an engine; your budget is £40 million. Make your selections from the grand prix shopping list (printed right): the only restriction is that your third driver must come from the £1 million category. Details of how to enter are given on this page.

HOW YOU SCORE

Points are awarded per race to the top six finishers, based on the Formula One World Championship points scoring system (10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1) but with an extra 10 points awarded to each of the top six finishers. All drivers are eligible to score for a top six finish but can also notch up extra points as follows:

- The fastest driver in race-day warm-up will collect six points, with five for the second and so on down to one point for the sixth quickest.
- Drivers score one point for each place they make up over their grid position. Points are not deducted by losing places.
- Five points are lost if your driver posts first retirement, four for second down to one point lost for the fifth retirement.
- If your driver makes the quickest pit-stop (from the entry of the pitlane to the exit) you gain five points.
- If your driver sets the fastest lap time in the race, you gain five points.
- If your driver receives a stop/go penalty, you lose five points.
- If your driver starts on pole position, you gain five points.
- The Independent will name a Driver of the Day after each race for a particularly impressive performance, worth five points.
- Non-qualification for a grand prix loses you two points. If a driver is on the FIA's published starting grid but fails to take the start, no points are lost.
- Drivers removed from the results for any reason lose all points gained that weekend. Any driver not competing in a grand prix weekend scores no points.
- Chassis score and lose points in the same way as drivers for a top six finish or any early retirement. The score is based on the first chassis home of that particular manufacturer. Likewise, only the first chassis retirement will count if they are both among the first five to retire.
- Engine rules are the same as the chassis rules, without the retirement penalties.

Plus prizes to be won with every grand prix

DREAM TEAM TOP PRIZE

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points at the end of the Grand Prix Championship season will win our top prize – a drive in a 650bhp F1 car. You will be flown to the AGS team's training school in the south of France for the most exhilarating experience of your life. The school specialises in F1 courses and provides all the racewear and instruction you will need for a day driving F1 and other single seat cars.

JAPANESE GRAND PRIX PRIZE

The Dream Team manager with the highest number of points following the Japanese Grand Prix will win a day out testing with the Tyrrell Formula One team at Silverstone.

HOW TO ENTER

Choose your Dream Team from the shopping list on this page. Remember, you must choose three drivers (the third from the £1 million section), one chassis and one engine. You must not exceed your budget of £40 million.

Give your team a name and register it by ringing **0891 891 805**.

You will immediately be asked the entry question: How many races are there in this year's Formula One World Championship?

To enter your Dream Team details you can use one of two methods.

Method 1 uses a tone phone that lets you key in the code numbers of your driver, chassis and engine choices. The computer will check that your team falls within budget and is eligible.

Method 2 uses a non-tone phone and you give your details verbally. A budget check is not possible using this method.

When you have registered your Dream Team, you will be asked to predict the number of points this year's champion will notch up over the year. In case of a tie at the end of the season, the nearest figure to the champion's points will win the top prize. In the event of a further tie, the team that registered first will win.

Once you have registered your team you will be asked for your name, address and telephone number. Your team selections plus your personal details will be played back to you and, when you confirm that they are correct, you will be given a PIN number.

This is confirmation of your entry and will enable you to access the score checking line.

There is no limit on the number of teams an individual can enter, but only one team can be registered per call.

CHECKING YOUR SCORE

You can check your team's position at any *time by calling* **0891 891 806** *and quoting* your PIN number. If you want to know the individual driver, chassis and engine scores from the most recent race, call **0891 891 807**. This line will also list the Top 50 Formula One Dream Teams.

Rules

1. All telephone calls are charged at 45p per minute cheap rate, 50p per minute at all other times, with a typical call to secure your entry lasting between five and seven minutes.

2. The deadline to be included in a particular race is midday the Friday prior to that race.

3. The judge's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into and there is no cash alternative for prizes.

4. Employees of Newspaper Publishing Plc, Haymarket Publishing Ltd and all associated companies and their families are ineligible.

5. Entrants must be 18 or over and residents of the UK or the Irish Republic.

6. To be eligible for the main prize, you must hold a current driving licence, be no more than 1.95m tall and weigh no more than 220lbs.

7. All scores will be worked out according to the official FIA time sheets produced at the meeting. The values stated for drivers, engines and chassis bear no relation to real life.

8. In the event of a tie for the Dream Team Top Prize or for any of the individual race prizes, the team that registered first will win.

9. For lost PIN numbers please call: 0891 891 808. For our Helpline call: 01275 344183.

10. The Top 50 Teams Line, lists the top 50 teams from the last race. Both the Team Position Check Line and the Results & Top 50 Teams Line will be updated at 2 pm on the Monday following a race.

Shopping List

DRIVERS
£25m
1 M Schumacher
£23m
2 J Alesi
3 D Hill
£20m
4 G Berger
£18m
5 D Coulthard
6 E Irvine
7 J Villeneuve
£13m
8 M Hakkinen
9 H H Frentzen
£10m
10 M Brundle
11 R Barrichello
12 J Herbert
£6m
13 M Salo
14 P Lamy
£4m
15 P Diniz
16 U Katayama
17 J Verstappen
18 O Panis
£3m
19 L Badoer
20 R Rosset
21 A Montermini
£2m
22 G Fisichella*
23 V Sospiri*
24 T Marques*
25 F Lagorce*
26 H Noda*
27 T Inoue*
£1m
28 M Blundell*
29 J-C Boullion*
30 K Brack*
31 K Burt*
32 E Collard*
33 N Fontana*
34 D Franchitti*
35 N Larini*
36 J Magnussen*
37 A Prost*
38 G Tarquini*
39 K Wendlinger*

CHASSIS
£20m
40 Benetton
41 Williams
£18m
42 Ferrari
£15m
43 McLaren
£14m
44 Sauber
45 Jordan
£10m
46 Ligier
£6m
47 Tyrrell
£5m
48 Arrows
£3m
49 Minardi
£1m
50 Forti*

ENGINE
£26m
51 Renault
£18m
52 Ferrari
£15m
53 Mercedes
£12m
54 Peugeot
£10m
55 Mugen
£8m
56 Ford V10
£6m
57 Yamaha
£4m
58 Hart
£3m
59 Ford Zetec V8
£2m
60 Ford ED V8

1996 RACE SCHEDULE
Japanese GP
October 13

Not competing in the Japanese GP

DREAM TEAM registration: 0891 891 805

TEAM POSITION CHECK LINE: 0891 891 806
RESULTS & TOP 50 TEAMS: 0891 891 807

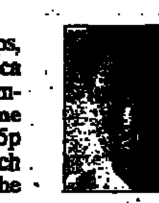
market report / shares

DATA BANK

FTSE 100	
4009.3	-26.3
FTSE 250	
4431.3	-4.0
FTSE 350	
1995.4	-10.7
SEAQ VOLUME	
645.7m shares,	
40,997 bargains	
Gilts Index	
95.10	+0.20

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

Yeltsin rumours push Footsie back towards 4,000



MARKET REPORT

PATRICK TOOHER

The FTSE 100 index drifted back towards the 4,000 level yesterday, weighed down by a weak opening on Wall Street and rumours, later denied by Moscow officials, that Russian president Boris Yeltsin had either stepped down or died.

Mr Yeltsin is said to be still working from a hospital bed outside the Russian capital, but the scare added to the jittery state of global bond and equity markets. The index of leading UK shares closed down 26.3 points at 4,009.3, just off their intraday lows.

Drugs were on a downer after US selling and a bearish broker comment on **Glaxo Wellcome** from Lehman Brothers.

The broker cut its recommendation to hold from buy on concerns that Glaxo had been upstaged by Biochem Pharma in releasing data about its lamivudine drug for Hepatitis B. Glaxo's shares were the weakest among the blue chips, falling 31p to 990p. **Zeneca** slipped 38p to 1612.5p in sympathy, as did **SmithKline Beecham**, which slipped 15.5p to 800p despite Merrill Lynch doubling its core holding in the company after meeting directors.

Oils, another favoured sector for US investors, also suffered as Brent crude prices struggled to hold $24 a barrel. **Enterprise** closed 16.5p lower at 568.5p, **Lasmo** was down 5.5p at 218.5p and **BP** was off 11p at 688.5p while **Shell** closed 12p lower at 1028p.

Day two of the rest of **Eurotunnel**'s stock market life saw further selling, this time from French investors. The shares dived 11.5p to 93.5p amid renewed uncertainties about this week's £4.7bn debt restructuring deal.

BT continued its poor run, declining 7.5p to 348.5p – the lowest level in three months – after Germany's RWE called off its telecoms alliance with the UK operator and German utility Viag.

After the market closed **Cable & Wireless**, down 4p at 430p, confirmed it had extended its alliance with Veba, another German utility, to include RWE in a bid to address the German telecoms market, the largest in Europe.

On the positive side, supermarket giant **Asda** was among the top Footsie performers, putting on 2p to 109.75p after a buy recommendation from broker SBC Warburg.

Glass maker **Pilkington** managed a 3.5p climb to 187.5p, making the shares the best Footsie performers of the day. There was vague talk that optimism on German interest rates was supporting the stock, though analysts fear that weak trading conditions in continental Europe could see profits well below the £180m they currently have pencilled in.

Millennium & Copthorne added 2p to 320p on further consideration of yesterday's £81m purchase of the Britannia hotel in London's Grosvenor Square. House broker NatWest likes the deal, M&C's first since flotation in April, and has raised next year's profit forecast by £1m to £20.9m.

The bomb attacks on British army headquarters outside Belfast, and the de facto end of the IRA's two-year ceasefire in Northern Ireland, hit Dublin-based **Jurys Hotel**, down 10p to 280p.

Investors' love affair with pub companies and themed restaurant groups shows no signs of waning. **Regent Inns** raced ahead 6p to 252.5p, **PizzaExpress** served up a 6p increase to 499.5p and **JD Wetherspoon** was again in demand, up 11p to 1147.5p.

Shares in Sheffield-based **Eurovein**, one of the new issue flops from the class of 1994, continued their slow rehabilitation, closing 14p higher at 67.5p as the blade maker returned to the black. Pre-tax profits reached £1.4m in the year to July versus a loss of £1.2m a year ago following a revamp of management and strategy at its surface treatment, filtration and component manufacturing units. The dividend is raised to 3p from 0.51p.

Floated at 141p in November 1994, the shares fell to as low as 33p on the back of two profit warnings and heavy losses. But interest in the shares grew earlier this year when Manchester-based engineer Villiers built up a 12.3 per cent stake. House broker Albert E Sharp looks for pre-tax profits this year of £2m, putting the shares on a forward multiple of less than seven and yielding 7.5 per cent.

Shares in **Frost** motored ahead 7.5p to 130p after the petrol retailer said an easing in the forecourt price war had led to a strong recovery at its Save stations.

Albert Fisher added 1.25p to 40.75p with a healthy 5.1 million shares traded. Hopes are rising that the food processor will announce the sale of its US distribution business. A price tag of £60m has been suggested.

TAKING STOCK

❑ Shares in AIM-quoted Dawson Holdings, Britain's third largest newspaper distributor, rose 30p to 1675p for a two-day gain of 75p. The jump follows a site visit on Tuesday by analysts and fund managers. Dawson's shares are among the most liquid on AIM and were the most heavily traded on the junior market in July.

❑ BTG, the old British Technology Group, moved sharply higher in late trade. The shares closed up 37.5p at 2387.5p on hopes that Ford is about to sign a licensing deal for Torotrak, BTG's automotive transmission system that saves on fuel consumption.

❑ A tour of institutional investors is paying off for Jarvis. Shares in the construction group, which owns a British Rail maintenance contract, rose 5.5p to 103p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.
Other details: r Ex rights x Ex-dividend a Ex all u Unlisted Securities Market s Suspended pp Party Paid pm Nil Paid Shares. ‡ AIM Stock Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seaq. Simply dial 0891 123 335, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below.

FTSE 100 – Real-time	00	Sterling Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	36
UK Stock Market Report	01	Bullion Report	05	Water Shares	39
UK Company News	02	Wall St Report	20	Electricity Shares	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Tokyo Market	21	High Street Banks	41

Anyone with a tone-dial telephone can use this service. For a detailed description of The Independent Index, including its portfolio facility, phone 0891 123 333. For assistance, call our helpline 0171 873 4375 (9.30am - 5.30pm).
Calls cost 39p per minute (cheap rate), and 49p at all other times. Call charges include VAT

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000	Stock	Vol'000
Imperial Tobacc	1990000	ASDA Group	820000	BP	670000	Hanson	620000
BTR	1470000	Lloyds TSB	810000	Glaxo Wellcome	630000	Bank of Scotld	510000
BT	1170000	Cable & Wire	740000	British Energy	620000	Albert Fisher	510000
British Steel	1120000	LucasVarity	720000	Reuters	580000	Tesco	460000
BAT Inds	870000	British Gas	690000	Shell Transport	540000	Hillsdown	460000

FTSE 100 Index hour by hour

Open 4025.5 down 10.1	11.00 4022.3 down 13.3	14.00 4025.1 down 10.5
09.00 4031.5 down 4.1	12.00 4023.7 down 11.9	15.00 4019.1 down 16.5
10.00 4028.4 down 7.2	13.00 4022.0 down 13.6	16.00 4008.1 down 27.5
		Close 4009.3 down 26.3

Share prices (1996 High, Low, Stock, Price, Chg, Yld, P/E, Index Code): Alcoholic Beverages; Banks, Merchant; Banks, Retail; Breweries, Pubs & Rest; Building/Construction; Building Materials; Chemicals; Distributors; Diversified Industrials; Electricity; Electronics; Engineering; Engineering Vehicles; Extractive Industries; Food Manufacturers; Gas Distribution; Health Care; Household Goods; Insurance; Internationals; Investment Companies; Investment Trusts; Leisure & Hotels; Life Assurance; Media; Oil Exploration; Oil, Integrated; Other Financial; Pharmaceuticals; Printing & Paper; Property; Retailers, Food; Retailers, General; Support Services; Telecommunications; Textiles & Apparel; Transport; Water

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Index-linked; Shorts; Mediums; Longs; Undated

[illegible]

Rights Issues

Stock	Price	Chg
Davis Fin Units ULS	5½pm	
FI Group	2pm	
Grampian Hldgs	2pm	

Recent Issues

Stock	Price	Chg
AEA Technology	335½	
Airtech	70½	-4
Aser Opps U Ln 09/06	95	
Banner Bond	100½	
Cluden Bay	85	
Dairon Electn	185½	-2
Elec Retail Sys	197½	
Eurasia Mining	36	
GT Chile Growth Fund	£25⅛	
Grosvenor Land	15¼	
Harristone 8% Cum Cv	120½	
Imperial Tobacco	405½	-6½
Ingenuity Telecomm	172½	-2
Mears Group	114	
Millennium Chem	£14⅛	
Oriental Restaurants	209½	
Personal Number Co	84½	
Polydoc	69½	
Shelbourne	97½	
Thistle Hotels	173½	
Ultra Electronics	280½	
Wesley Group	7¼	

business

Voters should be thankful for the fiscal vigilantes

ECONOMIC VIEW
DIANE COYLE

One of the achievements of the Major Government has been the doubling of Britain's national debt. Interest payments on this debt are the fourth biggest category of government spending, after social security, education and health.

The debt matters for a variety of reasons but not necessarily in the ways that many people would expect. For instance, the obvious worry – that the nation is building up a liability that taxpayers will eventually have to honour – is a red herring. For one thing, it is a government liability mainly to British citizens, for whom it is an asset in the form of holdings of gilt edged securities. For another, the level of debt is the result of financing past deficits and has to be serviced. It is unthinkable that the British Government should default so we have to grit our teeth and pay the taxes that pay the interest.

A more interesting explanation of why the national debt matters is given in a new book by Francis Cavanaugh, a Washington consultant who used to work at the US Treasury*. The national debt and proposals for a balanced budget have been a hot topic across the Atlantic, where the Federal government had to shut down twice last winter because Congress had not authorised an increase in its debt ceiling.

Mr Cavanaugh argues that stopping the debt from growing any further is a necessary step to restoring public confidence in government. He writes: "Much of the public cynicism about government undoubtedly arises from the fact that for 26 years leaders of both political parties have failed to deliver on their promises to balance the budget.

"Even voters who do not worry much about the deficits conclude that politicians are liars or incompetents because they do not achieve what they [the politicians] say should be achieved."

The same point has been made recently by another American economist, Herbert Stein. "Nothing better reveals the vacuum in economic policy than the gap between the nearly universal statements of aversion to budget deficits and the prospect of exceptionally large deficits as far ahead as the eye can see," he wrote in a paper in 1994.

'Politicians cannot have the pleasure of spending without the pain of taxing'

In other words, the national debt matters because its increase reflects the fact that governments have consistently run big budget deficits, despite telling us voters that big budget deficits are a bad thing.

Despite or perhaps because of their performance shortfall, the politicians' message has become more insistent. Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, tells anybody who will listen that his aim is to balance the budget in the medium term.

His Labour shadow, Gordon Brown, tries to outdo him in the toughness of his rhetoric. European governments have started to make heroic efforts to meet the ceilings on deficit and debt set out in the Maastricht Treaty, and are negotiating how to bind themselves to these ceilings after the start of the single currency.

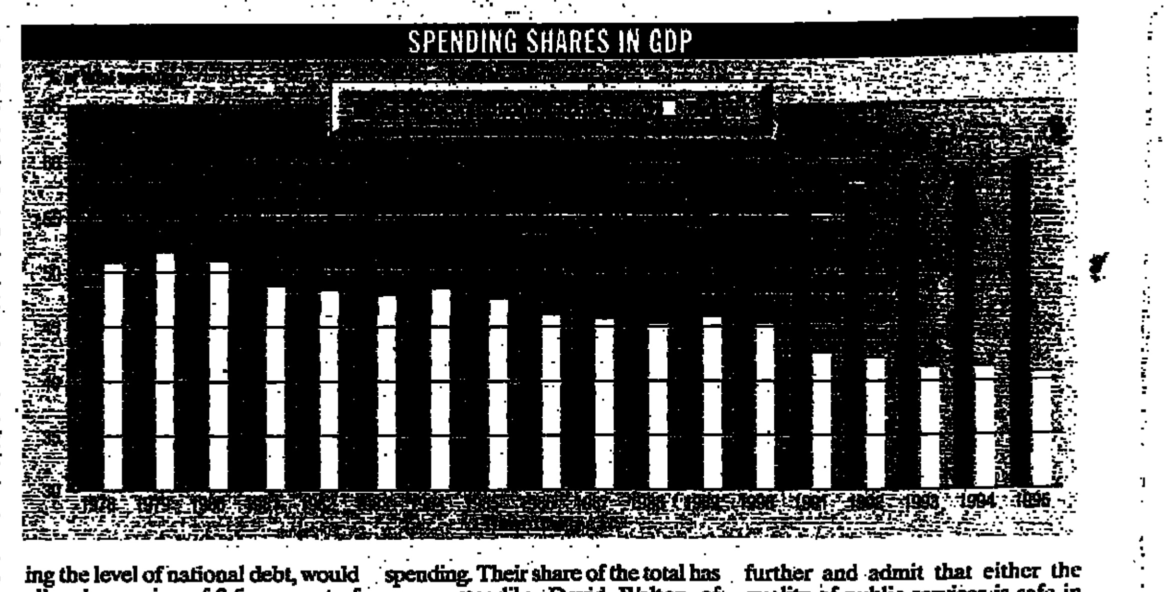
The fashion amongst politicians for the hair shirt raises two interesting questions. Why has fiscal prudence come into vogue? And how will they walk their talk, and put the prudence into practice?

The answer to the first question lies in the power of the financial markets, which have filled the policy vacuum Mr Stein referred to. There have been several episodes during the 1990s of what it has become fashionable to describe as fiscal vigilantism by the markets: a country whose budget deficit has reached alarming proportions finds that its currency comes under attack from speculators.

Calm is restored by a mix of higher interest rates and emergency budget measures. Italy, Spain and Sweden have suffered, for example. Many economists think the weakness of the dollar in the year before the G7 took action in April 1995 was an extended example of financial markets taking fright at a government deficit.

Despite the criticism implied by referring to them as vigilantes, the "speculators" tend not to push matters to a crisis until a government has got itself into very big trouble. There have been more crises because some European governments have got themselves into potentially explosive fiscal problems. It would be useful, in fact, to get a bit more foresight from the markets so they would do their vigilante act well before crisis-point. Even so, they are flagging a useful warning of unsustainable debt creation and future tax increases. Voters ought to be grateful rather than critical.

This home truth explains why fiscal caution has entered the vocabulary of politicians. Ministers of finance are well aware that if they appear to be lackadaisical about their budgets, they run the risk of a run on the currency and an increase in market levels of interest rates. Whether they are genuine converts to deficit reduction or just embrace it in order not to be martyred by the markets, they have to appear to believe.



The more difficult question to answer is how governments will achieve their fiscal consolidation. Yesterday's *Green Budget*, presented by investment bank Goldman Sachs and the Institute for Fiscal Studies, calculated what a sustainable government deficit would be in the case of the UK.

There are several possible principles of prudence. One is the "golden rule" that the government should only borrow to finance investment. The appropriate definition of investment is open to debate, but roughly speaking, the rule implies a shortfall between revenues and spending of around 1 per cent of GDP.

An alternative principle, stabilising the level of national debt, would allow borrowing of 2.5 per cent of GDP on plausible assumptions about likely growth and interest rates. The single currency is likely to set a permanent 3 per cent ceiling on the budget deficit, which would also imply aiming for about 1 per cent of GDP on average. Mr Clarke's balance in the medium term obviously implies a figure of zero instead.

As the *Green Budget* ** points out, with the PSBR likely to be 3.3 per cent of GDP this year, there is some way to go. If the Government hits its current spending plans, however, it calculates that borrowing would fall below 2 per cent of GDP in 1998/99 and below 1 per cent of GDP in 2000.

Unfortunately there is good reason to be sceptical about the plans. The three big categories, social security, health and education, are the motors of growth in government spending. Their share of the total has grown steadily. David Walton of Goldman Sachs posed the question clearly yesterday: "The fundamental issue is how the Government's objective of achieving a declining share of spending in GDP can be squared with maintaining the provision of these front-line services at a level and standard that the public expects or needs."

Taxpayers in the rich industrial countries want their government to continue increasing spending on these services, increasing the quality of health care as medical science advances, for example, or making sure there are computers in classrooms. These things have a cost.

This also goes to the heart of Mr Cavanaugh's book, a moral that applies as much to the UK as to the US: politicians can not have the pleasure of spending without the pain of taxing. Their rhetoric has to go one step further and admit that either the quality of public services is safe in their hands but taxes will have to go up, or that taxes can fall further but that means a continual squeeze on health, education and social security.

Both parties give us only one side of the equation in the hope that a long-term improvement in economic growth will materialise to transform the algebra for the better. It is a dishonest formula to put before the electorate.

* *"The Truth about the National Debt", Francis Cavanaugh, Harvard Business School Press, September 1996.*

** *Available from the IFS, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE, £20. The IFS runs "Be Your Own Chancellor" on its Internet site, http://www.ifs.org.uk.*

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling Spot	1 month	3 months	Dollar Spot	1 month	3 months	D-Mark Spot
US	1.5645	8-6	16-13	1.000	—	—	0.6542
Canada	2.1186	39-34	112-104	1.3542	19-18	60-58	0.8860
Germany	2.3913	58-52	172-163	1.5285	31-29	98-95	1.0000
France	8.0834	176-157	490-458	5.1668	90-85	273-263	3.3803
Italy	2383.8	43-58	125-147	1523.7	34.5-41.5	92.0-103.0	996.860
Japan	174.42	87-83	249-243	111.48	51-50	151-149	72.9375
ECU	1.2497	20-17	56-51	1.2519	13-14	44-45	0.5226
Belgium	49.296	14-10	38-31	31.509	75-55	213-182	20.6143
Denmark	9.1616	195-151	537-441	5.8559	99-79	298-247	3.8311
Netherlands	2.6848	74-66	210-196	1.7161	39-37	121-115	1.1227
Ireland	0.9763	1-3	4-6	1.6026	3-2	8-4	0.4082
Norway	10.174	130-70	270-160	6.5028	50-25	119-89	4.2544
Spain	201.21	15-25	45-62	128.61	16-20	40-48	84.1413
Sweden	10.302	11-5	32-22	6.5850	41-16	152-101	4.3081
Switzerland	1.9595	79-71	219-207	1.2525	45-42	130-125	0.8194
Australia*	1.9820	13-20	35-45	1.2869	14-16	33-35	0.8288
Hong Kong	12.097	610-210	980-430	7.7320	2-0	2-7	5.0586
Malaysia	3.9190	0-0	0-0	2.5050	27-30	80-85	1.6389
New Zealand*	2.2689	74-82	210-223	1.4502	54-56	97-99	0.9488
Saudi Arabia	5.8677	0-0	0-0	3.7505	1-4	5-9	2.4537
Singapore	2.2058	0-0	0-0	1.4099	24-19	70-65	0.9224

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1.5648	0.9999	Nigeria	125.388	80.1200
Austria	16.8225	10.7527	Oman	0.6025	0.3850
Brazil	1.6022	1.0238	Pakistan	57.8001	36.9330
China	12.9903	8.3005	Philippines	41.1595	26.3000
Egypt	5.3196	3.4013	Portugal	241.997	154.680
Finland	7.1488	4.5679	Qatar	5.6922	3.6395
Ghana	2674.44	1710.00	Russia	8493.26	5427.00
Greece	375.475	239.920	South Africa	7.1090	4.5425
India	55.7746	35.6500	Taiwan	43.0532	27.5100
Kuwait	0.4695	0.3000	UAE	5.7482	3.6730

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount: subtract from spot rate
rate quoted low to high are at a premium: add to spot rate
*Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals.
For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033.
Calls cost 39p per minute (cheap rate) 49p other times.

Interest Rates

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	5.75%	Discount	2.50%	Prime	8.75%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	Belgium	
Intervention	3.55%	Canada		Fed Funds	5.25%	Discount	2.50%
Italy		Prime	5.50%	Spain		Central	3.00%
Discount	8.25%	Discount	5.00%	10-Day Repo	6.75%	Switzerland	
Netherlands		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	1.00%
Advances	2.50%	Discount	3.25%	Repo (Ave)	4.95%	Lombard	4.125%

Bond Yields

HSBC Markets Research

Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %	Country	5yr	yield %	10yr	yield %
UK	7[illegible]%	6.82	7[illegible]%	7.36	Netherlands	6[illegible]%	4.81	6[illegible]%	5.86
US	6[illegible]%	6.24	6.9%	6.49	Spain	10.10%	6.77	10.15%	7.57
Japan	5.5[illegible]%	1.80	3[illegible]%	2.72	Italy	9[illegible]%	7.71	9[illegible]%	8.26
Australia	8[illegible]%	7.21	10%	7.60	Belgium	5%	4.74	7%	6.05
Germany	5.38[illegible]%	4.89	6.25[illegible]%	5.97	Sweden	13%	6.20	6%	7.03
France	5[illegible]%	4.89	7.25%	5.91	ECU OAT	6%	5.05	7[illegible]%	6.28

Yields calculated on local basis. †new benchmark

Money Market Rates

	O'Night	7 Day	1 Month	3	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	[illegible] 8	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs	-	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Local Authority Deps	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Discount Market Deps	6	[illegible]	-	-	-	-
Treasury Bills (Buy)	-	-	[illegible]	[illegible]	-	-
Dollar CDs	-	-	5.10	5.16	5.22	5.37
ECU Linked Dep	- -	- -	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Tourist Rates

£ Buys		£ Buys		£ Buys	
Australia(Dollars)	1.9175	France(Francs)	7.8060	New Zealand(Dollars)	2.1750
Austria(Schillings)	16.2950	Germany(Marks)	2.3160	Norway(Kroner)	9.9425
Belgium(Francs)	47.8600	Greece(Drachmae)	366.7500	Portugal(Escudos)	236.4000
Canada(Dollars)	2.0650	Hong Kong(Dollars)	11.7800	Spain(Pesetas)	195.5000
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.7045	Ireland(Punts)	0.9455	Sweden(Kronor)	10.2000
Denmark(Kroner)	8.9180	Italy(Lira)	2325.0000	Switzerland(Francs)	1.9000
Holland(Guilders)	2.6040	Japan(Yen)	172.0000	Turkey(Lira)	139583.0000
Finland(Marks)	7.0620	Malta(Lira)	0.5485	United States(Dollars)	1.5290

Liffe Financial Futures

Contract		Settlement price	High for day	Low for day	EstConts traded	Open interest
Long Gilt	(Dec 96)	111-03	111-17	110-21	117654	168810
German Gvt Bd	(Dec 96)	99.68	99.94	99.48	214637	253488
Italian Bond	(Dec 96)	123.65	124.37	123.41	80592	82363
Japan Gvt Bd	(Dec 96)	123.46	123.81	123.27	3758	n/a
3 Mth Sterling	(Dec 96)	94.05	94.07	94.04	14908	107737
	(Mar 97)	93.92	93.95	93.91	10427	76295
3 Mth Euromark	(Dec 96)	96.87	96.88	96.86	30996	211021
	(Mar 97)	96.85	96.87	96.82	43527	217041
3 Mth Eurolira	(Dec 96)	92.37	92.43	92.36	14017	68302
	(Mar 97)	92.97	93.03	92.92	11942	44093
3 Mth Euroyen	(Mar 97)	99.33	99.33	99.33	907	n/a
3 Mth Euroswiss	(Dec 96)	98.38	98.41	98.35	5942	41233
	(Mar 97)	98.38	98.39	98.34	3776	24227
3 Mth ECU	(Dec 96)	95.90	95.91	95.89	1007	6719
	(Mar 97)	95.91	95.93	95.90	919	4190
FTSE 100	(Dec 96)	4044.0	4072.0	4032.0	15624	62327
FTSE 250	(Dec 96)	4454.0			0	3671

Liffe FTSE Index Option

Settlement price: 4010.00 — closing offer price

Series	3950	4000	4050	4100	Call/Put Total/vols
Oct	80/8	38/19	13/45	2/88	--
Nov	109/28	74/44	45/67	24/98	--
Dec	141/48	108/64	77/86	52/114	--
Jan	158/65	126/83	97/104	73/131	--

Energy

Brent Crude ($/barrel) IPE 5.30pm		*chg	Yr ago	Gas oil ($/tonne) IPE close		*chg	WTI 6pm		Products † ($/tonne) Spot CIF NW Europe	
Nov	24.51	+0.29	16.58	Oct	246.00	-1.00	Nov	25.40	Unleaded Gasoline	224/226
Dec	24.04	+0.28	16.55	Nov	238.25	-1.75	Dec	24.95	Heavy Fuel Oil	120/121
Jan	23.34	+0.30	16.53	Dec	229.75	-0.75	Jan	24.30	Naphtha	228/230
Vol 29,891	Index: 24.33			Vol:	24,529		Feb	23.65	EC Gasoil	248/250

*since 5.30pm previous day. Year ago prices average for week. Source ICIS-London Oil Reports †6pm prices

Commodity Indices

GCSI Indices

	Base date	+Spot	%chg Day	31 Dec	%chg YTD	Year ago	%chg Yr
Index	1970=100	213.48	+0.99	203.50	+4.90	178.44	+19.63
Agricultural	1970=100	249.31	+0.48	281.75	-11.52	261.40	-4.63
Energy	1970=100	82.86	+1.29	71.31	+16.20	57.29	+44.65
Indust'l Metals	1970=100	155.86	+1.63	193.32	-19.38	197.33	-21.02
Livestock	1970=100	194.50	+0.5	182.71	+6.45	180.49	+7.76
Precious Metals	1970=100	480.73	+0.19	489.86	-1.86	490.82	-2.06

Source: Goldman, Sachs & Co. GSCI is a trademark and servicemark of Goldman, Sachs & Co. †Close as of 8 Oct 1996

Industrial Metals

London Metal Exchange

	$/tonne Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks		chg
Aluminium HG	1286.5-7.5	1320-1	53682	967825	-	2450
Aluminium Alloy	1175-85	1200-5	1433	81504	+	336
Copper A	1933-4	1924-5	68104	220950	-	8625
Lead	765-7	765-6	6747	117100	-	625
Nickel	6980-90	7090-7100	10588	39948	+	336
Tin	5985-95	6040-50	3629	9990	-	200
Zinc	1006-7	1032-3	20583	549825	-	350

Settlement Conversion exchange rates: £/$ 1.5649 $/Dm 1.5297 $/¥ 111.48. Stock volumes & change in tonnes as at Tue 8 Oct 96

Precious Metals

Spink & Son

pm fix /oz	$	£	Coins	$	£		$	£
Platinum	384.25	245.70	Britannia	399	255	Krugrands	374/385	239/246
Palladium	117.25	74.95	Britannia.5 oz	202	129	Sovs	88/95	[illegible]/61
Silver spot	494.00	315.75	Britannia.25 oz	102	65	Nobles	383/393	[illegible]
Gold Buln	381.35	243.72	Britannia.10 oz	52	33	Maple Leaf	382/397	244/[illegible]

Agricultural

CMS

Cocoa LIFFE £/tonne		Coffee LIFFE $/tonne		Barley LIFFE £/tonne		Potatoes LIFFE £/tonne		Potatoes ATA Gd/100kg	
Nov	977	Nov	1549	Nov	101.40	Nov	35.00	-	-
Mar	1005	Mar	1489	Mar	102.90	Mar	74.40	Feb	23
May	1018	May	1458	May	104.25	Apr	75.00	Apr	15
Vol:	3,713	Vol:	4,642	Vol:	38	Vol:	68	Vol:	246

White Sugar LIFFE $/tonne		Freight LIFFE $10/pt		Wheat LIFFE £/tonne		Corn CBOT Cents/bushel	Hi-Lo	Sett
Dec	322.00	Oct	1135	Nov	102.40			
Mar	319.30	Nov	1205	Jan	104.40	Dec	297.00-293.25	294.00
May	319.30	Vol:	142	Mar	105.70	Mar	303.75-300.50	301.00
Vol	4190	Index	1044	Vol:	352	May	309.75-306.25	306.75

Other Softs

Nov	Maize (No.3)**	$/tonne	126.50	Oct	Soya Oil§	FL/100kg	91.25
Oct/Nov	Copra (††)	$/tonne	138.00	Sep/Oct	Coconut Oil (†)	$/tonne	742.50
Oct	Cotton (NY)	UScent/lb	74.20	Oct	Sunflower Oils	$/tonne	550.00
Oct	Wool	Acent/kg	715.00	Oct	Rapeseed Oil§	FL/100kg	97.00
Oct	Rubber*	Mcent/kg	310.50	Sep/Oct	Groundnut Oil	$/tonne	880.00

Origin: §Dutch/EC - any origin - †Philippines/Indonesia *Malaysia **N Europe Source: FT Information/Reuters

Latest Unit Trust Prices

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
AXA Equity & Law Unit Trust Managers			
AXA Equity & Law Hse, Corporation St,			
Coventry CV1 1QD			
Tel: 01203 553231			
General Acc	6860	7299	c242
General Inc	5728	6092	d242
UK Growth Acc	4704	5005	258
UK Growth Inc	3045	3240	258
Higher Inc Acc	6142	6662	405
Higher Inc Inc	4339	4615	405
Gilt Fxd Int Acc	2162	2294	d571
Gilt Fxd Int Inc	9467	9999	d571
Nth America	3302	3452	000
Europe	3703	3946	d035
Japan Tst Acc	4457	4742	d000
Pacific Basin Tst Acc	4062	4322	033
Brit Excel	930	9894	270
Brit Fndmtls Acc	1103	1244	d455
Brit Fndmtls Inc	7819	3379	d456
Global Opps	1061	1129	003
Balanced Acc	6455	6868	d262
Balanced Inc	6032	6407	d262
Barclays Unicorn Limited			
11 Broadway, Stratford, London, E15 4BJ			
Tel: 0181 5345544			
Balanced Trusts			
Bfst Inv Fd Acc	9273	9736	234
Bfst Inv Fd Inc	4413	4623	234
European Bd Acc	1183	1235	663
European Bd Inc	9834	1017	663
Exempt	8534	9091	276
FTSE 100	1034	1101	258
500	5125	5592	d238
General	3318	3551	d249
Property	2458	2615	52
Trustee	2318	2479	23
Income Trusts			
Cash Acc	1212	1242	511
Cash Inc	1001	1001	d511
Distribution	1145	1151	d598
Extra Income	1377	1473	d476
Gilt & Fxd Int*	5943	6151	d773
Income	5998	6415	453
Income Builder	7010	7477	d527
Intl Income	7240	7722	38
Growth Trusts - UK			
Capital	1456	1554	199
Growth Acc	4789	4681	203
Leisure (2)	7938	7332	073
Recovery	5035	5385	262
Smlr Cos Acc	6372	7476	229
Smlr Cos Inc	5937	6335	229
Special Sits	4025	4313	131
Growth Trusts - Overseas			
America	1730	1889	04
Amer Recovery Acc	5291	5775	
F East Gwth Acc	2386	2382	203
Far East Gwth	1726	1842	203
Euro Gwth Acc	2168	2331	043
Euro Gwth Inc	1994	2110	043
Japan	1492	1563	
Japan & Gen Inc	1485	1551	
Japan Spec Sits	6836	7273	
Worldwide	2320	2451	046
*Also known as Income Manager PEP			
Baring Fund Managers Ltd			
PO Box 801, 199 Bishopsgate,			
London EC2M 3YS			
Enq: 0171 782 9490, Dealing: 0171 214 1004			
American Growth	1389	1468	00
American Smlr Cos	1754	1865	00
Convertibles	6080	6512	d46
Eastern	3018	3244	03
Equity Income	1008	1077	42
European Growth	3715	3947	08
Europe Select	3697	3948	08
Exempt	1058	1088	28
Exempt Fixed Interest	1073	1085	80
German Growth	3075	3602	05
Global Bond	7204	7541	62
Global Growth	1507	1602	04

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
Japan Growth	1950	2074	00
Japan Sunrise	1591	1689	00
Korea Trust	628	6789	00
Portfolio	1487	1589	d20
Portfolio Acc	2818	3013	20
UK Growth	1074	1153	26
UK Smaller Cos	9918	1076	19
Select Managers	9085	9745	10
Charity Fund			
Overseas Gwth Exempt	7505	7603	01
Friends Provident Unit Trust Managers Ltd			
United Kingdom Hse, Castle St, Salisbury			
Wiltshire SP1 3SH Enquiries: 01722 715834			
Dealing: 01722 715835			
FP Managed Portfolio Service			
Capital Gwth Acc	13080	13910	156
Open Capital Gwth Acc	13380	14230	016
Cap Gwth w Income Inc	12110	12880	323
(Accum Units)	12840	13650	323
Open Cap Gwth w Inc Inc	12320	13100	378
(Accum Units)	13160	13990	378
FP Unit Trusts			
FP American	6332	6750	045
(Accum Units)	7066	7533	045
FP Amer Smlr Cos	21760	23210	000
FP Asian Growth	29440	30330	000
(Accum Units)	29880	31850	000
FP Australian	42260	45070	000
(Accum Units)	48030	51210	000
FP Euro Gth	29560	31530	000
(Accum Units)	32340	34490	000
FP Equity	46790	49900	236
(Accum Units)	103200	110000	236
FPAM Inst UK Sm Co Inc	11090	11830	178
(Accum Units)	11090	11810	178
FP International Bond	6040	6331	441
(Accum Units)	16830	17590	441
FP Intl Gwth	3801	4061	011
(Accum Units)	5698	6075	011
FP Pacific Basin Accum	22100	23570	d000
FP Income	6033	6435	503
(Accum Units)	21080	22480	503
FP Jap Sm Cos Accum	29630	31600	000
FP Monthly Distribution	7630	8138	d436
(Accum Units)	13760	14670	496
FP Sterling Deposit	10000	10010	d505
(Accum Units)	11530	11590	505
FP Tokyo	8066	8603	d000
(Accum Units)	8147	8690	000
FP UK Focus	4306	4595	d193
(Accum Units)	5305	5658	193
FP UK Growth	20380	21740	210
(Accum Units)	41100	43840	210
Stewardship	43820	46740	134
(Accum Units)	54940	58600	134
Stewardship Inc	8241	8790	465
(Accum Units)	11580	12330	465
Am Stwdship	13050	13970	022
(Accum Units)	14030	14960	022
Gartmore Fund Managers			
Gartmore House,			
16-18 Monument St, London EC3R 8QQ			
Tel: 0171-782 2000 Dealing only: 01277-264421			
Internet: http://www.fl.co.uk/gartmore			
UK Growth Funds			
British Growth	6202	6626	c175
Cash Trust	14643	14843	528
Practical Inv (Inc)	12480	13348	360
Do (Accum)	30193	32292	360
UK Index	18252	19344	321
UK Smaller Cos	20172	21574	d054
Income Funds			
Extra Yield	2521	2612	724
High Income	3481	3711	d490
UK Equity Income	16120	17268	d304
Global Bond	2279	3088	492
International Funds			
Emerging Markets	4779	5111	000
Global Managed*	15410	16371	140
Gold & Intl Res	11256	12041	000
Global Utilities	14446	15410	142

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
Overseas Funds			
American	20830	22116	071
European	14035	14878	079
Euro Sel Opps	21281	22568	d000
American Emerging	19305	20658	000
Hong Kong	17239	18417	154
Japan	23379	24814	000
Pacific Growth	22610	24182	000
Gartmore Pensions Strategy Funds			
Managed Equity	26950	28650	d190
Long Term Bal	28604	28604	d291
Med Term Bal	23494	23494	d287
UK Equity	31549	31549	236
UK Emerging Cos	18223	18223	191
American	33391	33391	080
Japan	12946	12946	000
European	36111	36111	098
Index Linked Gilt	18835	18895	265
Fixed Interest	17873	17873	d820
Amer Emerging Cos	43015	43015	000
Pacific	23976	23976	088
Emerging Mkts	12632	12632	d052
Index Strat Japan	14386	14386	022
Index Strat Pacific Rim	21090	21090	116
Index Strat Cont Eu	19314	19314	182
Index Strat USA	19511	19511	161
Overseas Bond Strategy	10752	10752	471
Gartmore Personal Pension Funds			
Managed Equity	12571	13373	-
Med Term Balanced	11208	11923	-
Long Term Balanced	12880	13701	-
UK Equity	14651	15585	-
UK Emerging Cos	8563	9109	-
American	15480	16446	-
Japan	6188	6583	-
European	14982	15849	-
Fixed Interest	9253	9843	-
Index Linked Gilt	8407	8943	-
Deposit	8771	9330	-
Emerging Markets	4809	5115	-
Pacific	4924	5237	-
Broker Unit Trusts			
BWH International	16232	17086	050
Briarcliff Gth P'folio Inc	7405	7815	080
Do (Accum)	7530	7947	080
Briarcliff Inc P'folio Inc	6542	6904	350
Do (Accum)	7249	7651	350
Briarcliff Wwide P'folio	6207	6551	010
Govett (John) Unit Management Ltd			
4 Battle Bridge Lane, London SE1 2HR			
Tel: 0171 378 7979			
UK Equity Inc	10280	10994	468
UK Small Cos	6700	7166	062
British Growth	6955	7437	d311
American Gwth	29780	31849	000
Japan Gwth	6358	6796	000
Greater China	20565	21394	016
Pacific Strategy	16142	17283	000
European Gwth	12204	13158	000
Intl Growth	17289	18500	000
US Index	£183392	£193234	375
FTSE 250 Index	9130	9828	d215
Monthly Income	4191	4485	d854
Geared UK Index	£158803	£167649	450
UK Safeguard	11860	12639	d000
Index & Bear Funds Dealing: 0171 895 0033			
Hong Kong Index	£87894	£93401	325
Hong Kong Bear	£77268	£82120	325
UK Index	£140223	£148031	450
Japan Index	£104440	£110348	000
US Index	£192518	£203317	325
Cash	£90730	£96209	900
UK Bear	£85073	£92362	450
Japan Bear	£88033	£93042	000
Gilt Bull	£118612	£125468	450
Gilt Bear	£83803	£87330	450
HSBC Unit Trust Management Ltd			
6 Bevis Marks, London EC3A 7QP Advisers: 0800 181890			
Investors: 0800 289505 Dealing: 0171 955 5055			
Benton	1030	1098	250
Benton Fund Initial Charge 5.0 per cent			

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
Legal & General (UT Managers) Ltd			
Temple Court, 11 Queen Victoria Street			
London EC4N 4TP			
Enquiries: 0171 528 6793 Dealing: 01277 690385			
http://www.legal-and-general.co.uk			
Cash Accum	5925	5925	d521
Equity Dist	59390	59390	d272
Equity Accum	122900	122900	d272
Equity Income	10570	10570	500
UK Tactical Allocation	6868	6868	d385
European	14880	14880	d106
Far Eastern	23600	23600	d
Fixed Interest	5511	5511	d724
Gilt	9223	9223	d661
Global Growth	8507	8507	021
Intl Bond	5412	5412	d517
Japanese	7066	7066	
North American	22590	22590	080
Pacific Growth	12370	12370	d020
UK Index	7825	7825	d319
UK Recovery	12040	12040	206
UK Smaller Cos	16230	16230	124
UK Stockmarket Acc	7328	7328	183
US Index	8835	8835	133
European Index	9382	9382	d189
Japan Index	3930	3930	-
Worldwide	10110	10110	140
Lloyds Bank Unit Trust Managers Ltd			
Mountbatten House, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4JF			
Tel: 01634 834000 Dealing: 01634 834313			
Balanced Inc	41940	44820	207
Balanced Acc	99070	105400	207
Cont Europe Gr Inc	8381	8823	057
Cont Europe Gr Acc	9020	9495	067
Extra Income Inc	28780	30620	382
Extra Income Acc	78790	83820	382
FTSE 100 Inc	12370	13170	281
FTSE 100 Acc	12920	13750	281
German Growth Inc	14250	15000	
German Growth Acc	14840	15730	
Growth Portfolio Inc	67320	71620	d002
Growth Portfolio Acc	70150	74630	002
High Interest Inc	10020	10390	d757
High Interest Acc	10820	11010	757
Income Inc	56430	60040	310
Income Acc	159000	169200	310
Income Portfolio Inc	57430	61100	421
Income Portfolio Acc	64240	68350	421
Japan Growth Inc	10320	10980	
Japan Growth Acc	10350	11020	
Master Trust Inc	6941	7385	125
Master Trust Acc	8016	8528	125
Millennium Acc	9672	10290	228
American & Gen Inc	25600	27240	
American & Gen Acc	29630	31530	
Am Sm Cos & Rec Inc	21250	22610	
Am Sm Cos & Rec Acc	21690	23080	
Pacific Basin Inc	26880	28600	014
Pacific Basin Acc	28630	30460	014
Smalr Cos & Rec Inc	53220	56630	187
Smalr Cos & Rec Acc	73960	78790	187
UK Equity Growth	16780	17860	d247
UK Equity Income	13040	13880	d386
UK Growth Inc	10850	11550	175
UK Growth Acc	13630	14500	175
Worldwide Growth Inc	36630	38950	030
Worldwide Growth Acc	54110	57570	030
Premier Exempt	17140	17920	232
Lloyds Exempt Umbrella Trust			
European Acc	22430	23350	173
Far Eastern Acc	7506	7900	154
Japan Acc	4784	4989	
North American Acc	24780	25630	136
UK Equity Acc	30340	31800	270
UK Small Cos Acc	15880	16660	193
M & G Securities Limited			
M&G House, Victoria Road, Chelmsford CM1 1FB			
Customer Services/Unit Dealing: 01245 390390			
Amer & General	5417	5718	038
(Accum Units)	6723	7155	036
Amer Recovery	5970	6313	026

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
(Accum Units)	6987	7282	026
Amer Smlr Cos	1807	1911	
(Accum Units)	1846	1952	
Australasian	2100	2221	224
(Accum Units)	2637	2780	224
Capital	10060	10650	274
(Accum Units)	12035	12728	274
Charifund	7651	7728	589
(Accum Units)	39165	39567	589
Commodity	4838	5118	024
(Accum Units)	7154	7565	024
Compound Growth	11428	12085	289
(Accum Units)	12467	13183	289
Corporate Bond	2591	2600	d74
Dividend	4480	4740	475
(Accum Units)	1984	2100	475
Equity Income	3284	3473	856
(Accum Units)	4553	4818	556
European & General	6502	6876	078
(Accum Units)	8350	8831	076
European Dividend	8180	8630	355
(Accum Units)	1038	1099	355
Extra Yield	4612	4877	d508
(Accum Units)	15529	16498	d508
Sth East Asia	3878	4101	d129
(Accum Units)	5185	5493	d129
Fund of Inv Tsts	7349	7772	189
(Accum Units)	14105	14918	189
General	7060	7470	37
(Accum Units)	2080	2200	37
Gilt Income	8321	8330	69
(Accum Units)	19153	19181	69
Gold	8000	8460	002
(Accum Units)	9570	1012	002
High Income	3360	3550	461
(Accum Units)	1435	1518	461
Intl Growth	9230	9760	082
(Accum Units)	1634	1727	082
International Inc	1132	1198	439
(Accum Units)	1774	1876	439
Japan & Gen	3990	4210	
(Accum Units)	4280	4510	
Japan Smaller Cos	1445	1528	
(Accum Units)	1458	1539	
Managed Growth	2780	2930	182
Managed Income	3000	3150	d425
Midland	8300	8860	324
(Accum Units)	2186	2312	324
Pension Ex	10968	11283	416
Recovery	4820	5100	285
(Accum Units)	8290	8770	285
Second General	7760	8200	382
(Accum Units)	2102	2223	382
Smaller Cos	7030	7430	337
(Accum Units)	1455	1539	337
Treasury	2512	2518	d547
Trustee	4520	4780	47
(Accum Units)	1920	2034	47
Newton Fund Managers Ltd			
2 Festival Square, Edinburgh EH3 9SU			
Clients 0800 614330 Broker 0500 550000			
Dealing 0500 446000			
Internet: information@newton.co.uk			
American	5568	5923	d000
American Acc	5610	5968	d000
Bridge	9789	10308	194
Cash Acc	6912	6912	529
Cash Income	5085	5085	529
Distributor	10542	11214	d281
European	5806	6176	000
Foundation	11256	11974	d282
General	21773	23169	158
Global	38115	40547	d000
Growth	14934	15946	d297
Growth Acc	14894	15851	d237
Higher Income Inc	3236	3441	d480
Higher Income Acc	3841	4102	d480
Income	28397	30091	d340
International Bond	15070	15679	625
Intrepid	14325	14901	172
Japan	2721	2894	000
Oriental Acc	15657	16669	053

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
Oriental Income	15309	16286	053
Personal Intl Gwth	3733	3949	000
Northern Rock Unit Trusts Ltd			
Bulman House, Regent Centre, Gosforth			
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 3HG			
Telephone: (0191) 285 2555			
Rock Managed	1165	1233	263
Northern Rock High Income	4870	5153	d623
Pembroke Administration Ltd			
37-41 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4JH			
Telephone & Dealing: 0171 813 2244			
Pembroke Growth	26210	26839	d126
Pembroke World Acc	8853	9205	d063
Pembroke Balanced	21456	22836	d352
Pembroke Eq Income	12636	13374	d569
Perpetual Unit Trust Mngmt Ltd			
Perpetual House 47-49 Station Rd			
Henley on Thames,			
Oxon RG9 1AF Tel: 01491 416100			
Investors Support Unit 01491 416123			
International Gwth Inc	70040	74850	d046
International Gwth Acc	70485	75329	046
Income	43640	46668	d314
W'wide Recovery Inc	46587	49828	045
W'wide Recovery Acc	46683	49908	045
American Growth Inc	32502	34834	001
American Growth Acc	32502	34834	001
European Gwth Inc	18364	19638	055
European Gwth Acc	18446	19688	055
Intl Emerging Cos Inc	30059	32149	001
Intl Emerging Cos Acc	30078	32170	001
Far Eastern Growth Inc	31230	33402	088
Far Eastern Growth Acc	31344	33524	086
UK Growth Inc	11672	12481	259
UK Growth Acc	12535	13404	259
High Income	11536	12338	370
Japanese Gwth Inc	20026	21435	033
Japanese Gwth Acc	20028	21415	033
PEP Growth	14805	15835	078
PEP Bond	5434	5656	788
Asian Smlr Mkts Inc	13942	14912	034
Asian Smlr Mkts Acc	13975	14947	034
American Smaller Cos Inc	20882	22334	001
American Smlr Cos Acc	20882	22354	001
Global Bond	5726	6033	d544
UK Smaller Cos Inc	10989	11753	144
UK Smaller Cos Acc	11708	12520	144
Money Acc	5502	5502	528
Latin American Gwth Inc	3852	3909	037
Latin American Gwth Acc	3686	3943	037
Exempt Funds			
UK Exempt	38953	41662	268
Overseas Exempt	32834	35091	020
Prudential Unit Trusts Ltd			
51-59 Ilford Hill, Ilford, Essex, IG1 2DL			
Managed Tst	4698	4988	d168
Cash Haven Inc	10145	10195	469
Cash Haven Acc	11893	11951	469
Dist Inc	10519	11230	d582
Dist Acc	12269	12734	582
Global Growth	10365	11059	d127
Prudential Equity Inc	9128	9711	d484
Equity	89326	95666	d243
Prudential European	27854	28664	086
High Income	9403	10003	d524
Intl Grth	22879	24339	d120
Intl Sm Co	10085	10729	d045
Japanese	21212	21992	d000
Nth Amer	24740	25836	d130
Pacific Mkts	12130	12570	d085
Premier Inc	4895	5035	d693
Sm Cos	11448	12177	176
Spec Sits	13035	13867	d264
UK Growth	15977	16146	d215
Save & Prosper Securities Ltd			
16-22 Western Road,			
Romford, Essex RM1 3LB			
Clients: 0800 829 100 Brokerline: 0800 727 770			
Amer Inc & Gwth	8333	8828	304
Amer Smlr Cos	1687	1888	

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
Capital Portfolio	1625	1729	049
Cash	1352	1352	d519
China Dragon	6816	7253	123
Commodity	1551	1650	
Far Eastern	1109	1180	
Emerging Markets	3800	4043	030
Energy Inds	1878	1998	
European Gwth	2484	2643	027
Euro Inc & Gwth	9940	1057	159
Euro Smlr Cos	7588	8072	023
Exempt Income	1523	1653	349
Extra Income	5838	6027	580
Financial Secs	3178	3391	075
Far Eastern Sm Cos	4456	4743	
Gold & Exploration	1112	1183	
Growth	4563	4886	167
High Income	5040	5040	707
High Yield	2662	2853	d253
Income	1380	1468	349
Intl Bond	1669	1783	d573
ITU	2440	2596	d094
Japan Growth	1752	1863	d
Japan Smaller	1932	2055	
Korea	5155	5484	
Latin America	4234	4494	075
Masterfund	6324	6758	094
Premier Equity Inc	3743	3982	387
Premier Equity Gwth	1667	1773	039
Scotyields	2922	3109	d224
SE Asia	5238	5551	036
Select Intl	1609	1712	d086
Smaller Cos Inc	2984	3034	d317
Southern Africa	5825	6197	131
UK & Overseas	2052	2183	102
UK Gwth & Inc	3024	3217	330
UK Equity Gwth	8433	8971	136
UK Equity Inc	2642	2811	419
UK Sm Cos	6134	6526	128
U.S. Growth	2240	2383	
Univ Growth	1648	1753	069
Scottish Amicable Ut Tst Mgrs Ltd			
PO Box 14882 Craigforth Stirling, FK9 4ZD			
01786 448844			
Singer & Friedlander Inv Funds Ltd			
21 New Street, London, EC2M 4HR			
Tel: 0171 867 8777, Dealing: 0171 626 6226			
UK Equity Income	11030	11030	d469
Sterling Reserve	10058	10058	d479
Preferred Income	10798	10798	d499
Tai Pan	10764	10784	d
Aztec	6958	6958	d
American Growth	13355	13358	d
European	17008	17008	d
Global Bond	8070	8070	d757
Samurai	5646	5645	d
UK Growth	11147	11147	d259
UK Emerging Leaders	11374	11374	d249
Investment Trust	11843	11843	d147
Singer & Friedlander Unit Mgrs Ltd			
European Trust	9310	9904	092
Far Eastern Tst	7003	7443	000
Smaller Cos	2768	2942	088
Global Growth PEP	8025	8537	119
Investment Trust PEP	5955	6335	244
Preferred Income	1045	111	d804
Standard Life Unit Trusts			
PO Box 141, 1 Tanfield, Edinburgh EH3 5RG			
0800 33 33 53			
Standard Life Fund Mngmt Ltd			
Global Advantage Inc	4763	4767	143
Global Advantage Acc	5181	5217	143
Income Advantage Inc	3647	3866	d281
Income Advantage Acc	4273	4295	281
UK Equity Gth Acc	1020	1082	075
Premier Income Inc	4983	5245	d704
Premier Income Acc	5342	5633	704
Managed Acc	6428	6814	128
UK Eq High Inc Inc	4171	4422	d361
UK Eq High Inc Acc	5584	5898	361

Stock	Sell	Buy	Yld
Stewart Ivory Unit Trust Mgrs Ltd			
45 Charlotte Sq, Edinburgh EH2 4HW			
Dealing & Enquiries: 0131 226 3271			
American	5620	5953	
(Accum Units)	6632	7025	
British	13165	13929	d2[illegible]
(Accum Units)	25501	26980	298
Emerging Markets	1655	1763	078
(Accum Units)	1677	1788	078
Euro Smaller Co	6380	6773	d080
(Accum Units)	7180	7647	080
Japan	1308	1387	-
(Accum Units)	1318	1398	-
New Pacific	4400	4686	111
(Accum Units)	4734	5042	111
Investment Tst	2668	2820	d120
(Accum Units)	3083	3268	120
Mngd Equity	2111	2233	189
Mngd Equity Acc	2415	2565	189
Mngd Cash	9544	9544	d518
(Accum Units)	1459	1459	518
Thornton Unit Managers Ltd			
Swan House, 33 Queen Street, London EC4A 1AX			
Tel: 0171-246 3000, Dealing: 0171 246 3001			
Dresdner Europe Bd	4472	4660	57
(Accum Units)	7336	7648	57
European	34732	36347	10
(Accum Units)	35389	37056	10
Exempt	68556	71824	d32
(Accum Units)	240987	251756	d32
Global Emerging Mkts	8565	8848	05
(Accum Units)	9377	9796	05
Japan Tst	7641	8001	
(Accum Units)	7641	8001	
Little Dragons	9924	10391	
(Accum Units)	10218	10697	
Nth Amer Gwth	30306	31732	05
(Accum Units)	38028	39819	05
Oriental Income	4785	5010	d37
(Accum Units)	6725	7041	d37
Preference	12934	13543	d68
(Accum Units)	78948	82666	d68
Tiger	30586	32027	
(Accum Units)	32135	33649	
UK Blue Chip	8025	8403	18
(Accum Units)	8752	9164	18
UK Growth	67477	70656	d10
(Accum Units)	158164	165616	d10
UK High Yield	11614	12161	d57
(Accum Units)	41045	42979	d57
UK Mid-Cap	33211	34775	17
(Accum Units)	63483	66453	17
UK Smlr Cos	13450	14083	07
(Accum Units)	18073	18930	07
UK Smaller Cos Div	9402	9845	56
(Accum Units)	17619	18449	56
Virgin Direct			
Discovery House, Whiting Road, Norwich			
Tel: 0345 95 95 95			
Email: mail@virgin-direct.co.uk			
Income	10547	10547	d673
UK Index Tracking	13212	13212	d272

Key
d ex dividend
e exit charge when units sold
buy formerly 'offer'
sell formerly 'bid'
x Non SIB recognised funds
Copies of the most recent managers' reports and scheme particulars are available from fund managers free on request.

A more extensive list of Unit Trusts and Managed Funds, ranked by performance within each sector and including offer prices, is published in Saturday editions of the *Independent*.

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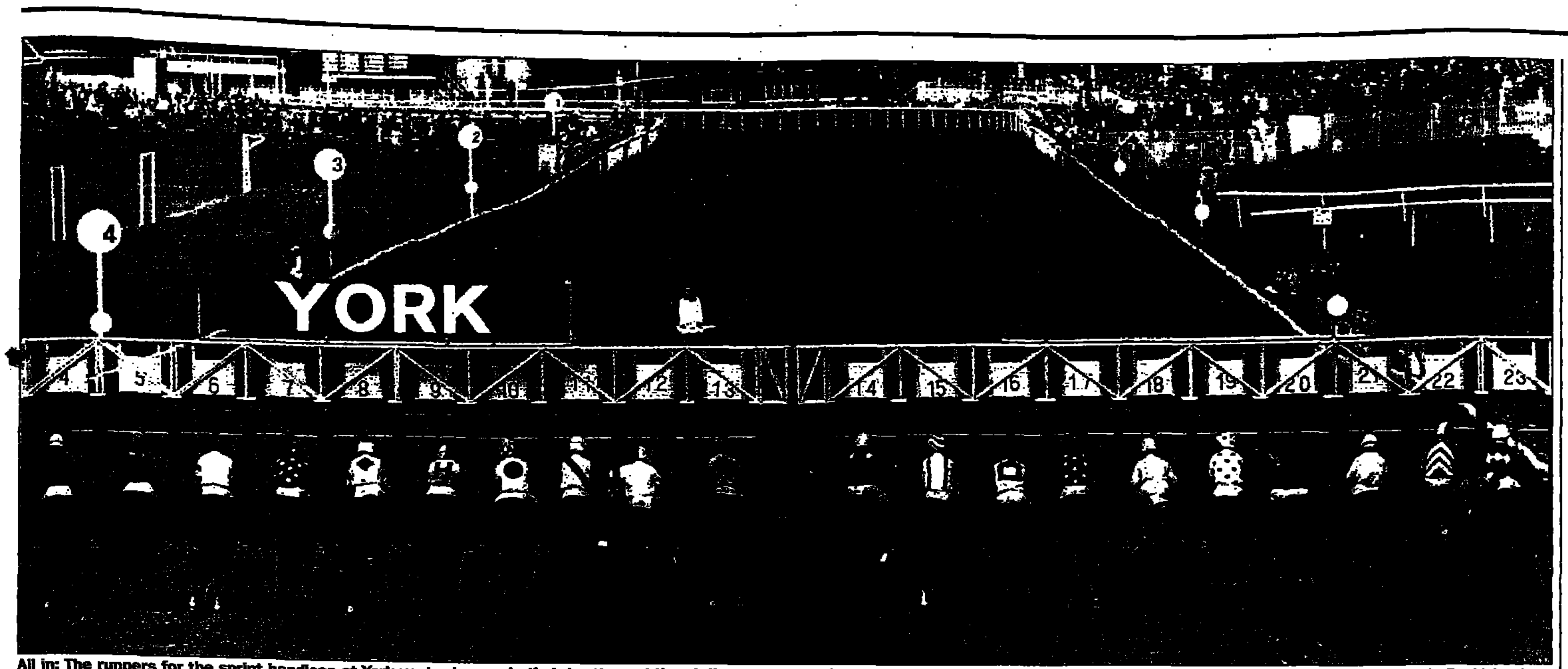
sport



All in: The runners for the sprint handicap at York yesterday are in their berths and the stalls are about to burst open before a success for Gone Savage from stall five Photograph: David Ashdown

Pardubicka marked for export with Stamp

Greg Wood on Britain's challenge for one of the world's most gruelling races

For those who feel that the Grand National lost much of its character when they filled in Becher's Brook, there is only one place to be this Sunday. For 10 minutes or so at Pardubice racecourse in the Czech Republic, horses and riders will contest the most gruelling steeplechase in the world, the Velka Pardubicka, across banks, ploughed fields, deep water-filled ditches and, of course, the notorious Taxis, an enormous open ditch. The pairing which emerges victorious could fairly claim to be, if not the best on the planet, then certainly the most courageous, and for the second year running, they are likely to be British.

It's A Snip, the winner 12 months ago when ridden by Charlie Mann, his trainer, will line up once again on Sunday, this time with Richard Dunwoody in the saddle. Even Dunwoody, though, admits that the horse to beat will be Irish Stamp, who is trained in Middleham by Ferdy Murphy and will be ridden by Norman Williamson.

Until recently, British interest in the Pardubicka was largely limited to occasional forays by cavalier amateurs riding their own point-to-pointers. Such was the unforgiving – some might say sadistic – nature of the course that serious trainers would not conceive of exposing their horses to such risk. As at Aintree, though, the organisers realised that the high fatality rate, among both riders and horses, could not be sustained. Alterations to the course have ensured that, while it remains formidable, the Pardubicka no longer asks questions of its competitors which most cannot hope to answer.

As a result, and again this mirrors the Liverpool experience, better horses are now being tempted by the race's £44,000 total purse, of which more than £22,000 will be earned by the winner. Irish Stamp may well be the most talented chaser to line up for any of the 106 renewals of the Pardubicka, and if he adapts to the track's unique demands, he will be very difficult to beat.

"He's the ideal type for the race," Murphy said yesterday. "He's very adaptable and he stays all day. He was second in the Belgian National at Waregem, which is a similar type of course, and when Richard [Dunwoody] saw how well he ran there, he said we'd be the ones to beat on Sunday. He did some great work before he left, and we also schooled him across a three-day-event course at Catterick. My son Paul travelled out with him and he's really pleased with how well he is."

Any local punters with access to a British form book will be in little doubt about where to place their bets. On official handicap ratings, Irish Stamp is 25lb superior to It's A Snip, who must take him on at level weights on Sunday. As Murphy put it, "with a bit of luck, he should nearly draw". It is also fortunate that Irish Stamp is not a natural front-runner, since the field must pick its way back and forth as it crosses a total of 55 obstacles, and even a rider of Williamson's ability could easily take a wrong turn.

As for the most famous obstacle, Murphy believes that most of the runners who come to grief at the Taxis, which is jumped only once, early in the race, do so because their riders are too keen to clear it. "I've talked to Richard Pitman, who has been out there, and he says they gallop at the Taxis at 100 miles an hour," the trainer said. "You want to ride it like a normal fence and allow your horse to pick up and really jump."

It sounds simple enough, but in practice it may be rather less so. "The owner likes the *craic*, so why not have a go?" Murphy said. We can only hope that the question will remain rhetorical on Monday morning.

Champion aim as Cecil hits century

Henry Cecil, fighting out the Flat trainers' championship with Saeed bin Suroor, notched his century of winners with a double at Nottingham yesterday, helping champion-jockey elect, Pat Eddery, to a treble in the process.

After a satisfactory gallop, Bosra Sham, the 1,000 Guineas winner, will be on Cecil's side in the race that may well decide the destination of the title, the Champion Stakes at Newmarket on Saturday week.

■ Martin Pipe's ex-stable jockey, David Bridgwater, has signed a contract to ride the horses of one of the trainer's former owners, Darren Mercer, including Banjo and Escartefigue.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Verzen
(York 3.00)
NB: Princess Topaz
(York 4.00)

RESULTS

YORK

2.00: 1. AMYAS (M Hills) 7-2 fav; 2. Style Dancer 14-1; 3. Burkes Manor 7-1. 12 ran. 2, ¾. (B Hills, Lambourn). Tote: £3.70; £1.60, £3.90, £2.50. DF: £37.50. CSF: £47.74. Tricast: £304.06. Trio: £187.90.

2.30: 1. PUCE (O Urbina) 9-2; 2. Step Aloft 13-8 fav; 3. Silently 10-1. 11 ran. 2, nk. (L Cumani, Newmarket). Tote: £5.10; £1.80, £1.10, £2.30. DF: £4.90. CSF: £12.67. Trio: £19.60.

3.00: 1. GONE SAVAGE (J Stack) 15-2; 2. Stuffed 12-1; 3. Squire Corrie 14-1; 4. Literary Society 14-1. 23 ran. 7-1 fav Saddlehome. 1¼, 1½. (W Musson, Newmarket). Tote: £8.80; £1.60, £2.70, £4.80, £3.80. DF: £43.80. CSF: £96.60. Tricast: £1,180.73. Trio: £555.20.

3.30: 1. PASTERNAK (G Duffield) 5-1; 2. Obelos 8-1; 3. Time For Action 20-1; 4. Manful 20-1. 20 ran. 3-1 fav Fern's Governor (6th). ¾, nk. (Sir Mark Prescott, Newmarket). Tote: £8.30; £1.90, £2.50, £9.50, £8.10. DF: £29.90. CSF: £46.38. Tricast: £693.30. Trio: £695.80.

4.00: 1. CYBERTECHNOLOGY (M Hills) 7-1; 2. Will You Dance 7-1; 3. Snow Partridge 5-4 fav. 14 ran. ½, 3½. (B Hills, Lambourn). Tote: £12.30; £2.90, £1.80, £1.10. DF: £28.40. CSF: £56.66. Trio: £21.80.

4.30: 1. WOLF MOUNTAIN (R Hughes) 7-4 fav; 2. Moonshiner 2-1; 3. Indian Brave 4-1. 8 ran. 2½, 1¼. (R Hannon, East Everleigh). Tote: £2.70; £1.10, £1.20, £1.40. DF: £2.50. CSF: £5.89.

5.00: 1. KALA SUNRISE (J Fortune) 14-1; 2. Hal's Pal 2-1 fav; 3. April The Eighth 7-1. 10 ran. ¾, hd. (C Smith, Wellingore). Tote: £21.40; £2.90, £1.90, £2.10. DF: £23.00. CSF: £42.68. Tricast: £213.01. Trio: £119.90.

Jackpot: Not won (pool of £15,884.32 carried forward to York today).
Placepot: £43.60. *Quadpot:* £14.40.
Place 6: £79.58. *Place 5:* £34.11.

NOTTINGHAM

2.10: 1. TIME CAN TELL (Dean McKeown) 5-2 fav; 2. Verinder's Gift 33-1; 3. Comeraka 11-2. 14 ran. 5, sht-hd. (C Murray, Newmarket). Tote: £3.00; £1.60, £4.60, £2.10. DF: £31.80. CSF: £78.41. Trio: £159.30. NRs: Cathies Flower, Don't Fool Me, Heavenly Dancer, Ryles Dancer.

2.40: 1. FASCINATING RHYTHM (Pat Eddery) 10-11 fav; 2. Brave Kris 20-1; 3. Elbasha 12-1. 13 ran. 1½, 3. (H Cecil, Newmarket). Tote: £1.80; £1.20, £4.20, £3.80. DF: £99.40. CSF: £26.01. Trio: £182.20.

3.10: 1. CASTAN (Pat Eddery) 6-1; 2. Classy Chief 33-1; 3. Watt 10-1; 4. Morocco 13-2. 17 ran. 11-2 fav Mustn't Grumble. Nk, sht-hd. (J Dunlop, Arundel). Tote: £6.30; £2.20, £10.90, £4.40, £2.70. DF: £171.10. CSF: £189.88. Tricast: £1,908.86. Trio: £228.00. NR: Spring Campaign.

3.40: 1. ANOTHER BATCHWORTH (S Whitworth) 7-1; 2. Dominelle 12-1; 3. Chadwell Hall 6-1; 4. Night Harmony 16-1. 19 ran. 2-1 fav Souperficial. ½, hd. (E Wheeler, Pangbourne). Tote: £12.30; £1.60, £3.20, £1.90, £6.50. DF: £103.70. CSF: £90.13. Tricast: £520.21. Trio: £144.80. NRs: Ashkernazy, Forzara, Robellion.

4.10: 1. SMILIN N WISHIN (J Reid) 11-4; 2. Scarpetta 5-2; 3. Sea Wedding 6-4 fav. 10 ran. 4, 1. (P Chapple-Hyam, Manton). Tote: £3.10; £1.10, £1.40, £1.30. DF: £6.20. CSF: £9.88. Trio: £2.30.

4.40: 1. AMBARGE (G Bardwell) 5-1; 2. Zalbay 7-1; 3. Sterling Fellow 7-1; 4. Ginka 10-1. 18 ran. 2-1 fav Miss Prism. 1½, nk. (M Britain, Newmarket). Tote: £7.30; £1.40, £2.10, £2.30, £2.20. DF: £31.80. CSF: £44.79. Tricast: £241.81. Trio: £165.80. *Following a stewards' inquiry, Fro, who finished fourth, has been disqualified and placed last.*

5.10: 1. TORREMOLINOS (Pat Eddery) 5-4 fav; 2. Raise A Prince 3-1; 3. Benning 3-1. 10 ran. 4, 1. (H Cecil, Newmarket). Tote: £1.80; £1.30, £1.10, £2.30. DF: £5.10. CSF: £5.70. Trio: £3.30. *After a stewards' inquiry, the placings remained unaltered.*
Quadpot: £32.50. *Placepot:* £108.20.
Place 6: £98.44. *Place 5:* £49.26.

TOWCESTER

2.20: 1. DO BE WARE (B Fenton) 16-1; 2. Parish Walk 4-6 fav; 3. Saltis 9-4. 4 ran. 9, nk. (J Ffitch-Heyes). Tote: £16.30. DF: £10.60. CSF: £28.42.

2.50: 1. YOUNG RADICAL (R Supple) 4-6 fav; 2. Tomal 13-8; 3. Ragtime Song 14-1. 5 ran. 1¼, 4. (J Upson). Tote: £1.50; £1.00, £3.30. DF: £1.10. CSF: £2.08.

3.20: 1. MILL O'THE RAGS (J F Titley) evens jt-fav; 2. Martha's Daughter evens jt-fav; 3. Ladies Tail 33-1. 4 ran. 3, 22. (Mrs D Haine). Tote: £1.90. DF: £1.30. CSF: £2.28.

3.50: 1. SNOW BOARD (D Byrne) 9-2; 2. Ragamuffin Romeo 2-1; 3. Wellbeli 15-8 fav. 5 ran. 2½, ¾. (Mrs M Jones). Tote: £5.30; £1.60, £1.60. DF: £8.10. CSF: £14.97.

4.20: 1. JIM VALENTINE (W Marston) 2-1 fav; 2. Frozen Drop 9-4; 3. K C's Dancer 14-1. 7 ran. 4, 15. (D Wintle). Tote: £2.20; £2.10, £2.40. DF: £2.50. CSF: £7.23.

4.50: 1. HYLTERS CHANCE (A P McCoy) evens fav; 2. Arrange A Game 100-30; 3. Credit Controller 7-2. 6 ran. 20, nk. (P Hobbs). Tote: £1.60; £1.30, £1.80. DF: £2.40. CSF: £4.77.
Placepot: £420.80. *Quadpot:* £26.50.
Place 6: £168.88. *Place 5:* £5.43.

YORK

HYPERION

2.00 Bolero Boy	3.30 Quiet Arch
2.30 MULTICOLOURED (nap)	4.00 Love Has No Pride
3.00 Verzen (nb)	4.30 Voila Premiere

GOING: Good. STALLS: 5f, 6f & 7f – stands side; remainder – inside.
DRAW ADVANTAGE: None.
■ Left-hand, U-shaped course. Flat and ideal for the powerful galloper.
■ Course is 1m S of city on A1036. York station 1m. ADMISSION: County Stand £18 (16-25 year-olds £11); Tattersalls £10; Silver Ring £5 (OAPs £2.50); Course Enclosure £3 (OAPs £1.50). Under-16s free all enclosures. CAR PARK: £2, remainder free.

SIS

■ LEADING TRAINERS WITH RUNNERS: H Cecil — 29 winners from 112 runners gives a success ratio of 25.9% and a loss to a £1 level stake of £11.63; J Dunlop — 19 winners, 99 runners, 19.2%, –£22.59; P Cole — 18 winners, 98 runners, 18.4%, –£10.54; R Hannon — 17 winners, 178 runners, 9.64%, –£70.56.
■ LEADING JOCKEYS: Pat Eddery — 44 winners, 228 rides, 19.3%, –£0.93; L Dettori — 42 winners, 192 rides, 21.9%, +£36.58; W Carson — 38 winners, 225 rides, 16.9%, –£39.50; W R Swinburn — 21 winners, 157 rides, 13.4%, +£0.13.
BLINKERED FIRST TIME: *Brownie's Promise (3.30, visored); General's Star (4.00, visored).*
WINNERS IN THE LAST SEVEN DAYS: Highborn (3.00) won at Newmarket on Friday.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Voices In The Sky (4.30) has been sent 288 miles by A Newcombe from Huntshaw, Devon.

2.00 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS STAKES (CLASS C) £8,000 added 2YO 7f Penalty Value £5,070

1 116 GREAT OVATION (41) (D) (Mrs E H Vestey) L Cumani 9 5 ... L Dettori 3
2 0031 BERYLLIUM (15) (D) (Lostford Manor Stud) R Hannon 9 0 ... R Hughes 5
3 143402 BOLERO BOY (19) (Sheriff Racing) M W Easterby 9 0 ... Pat Eddery 1
4 502332 FOOT BATTALION (67) (A S Hill) R Hollinshead 8 11 ... F Lynch (3) 6
5 15 MAYFAIR (46) (HRH Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 8 9 ... T Quinn 2
6 SODELK (Paul Clement) J Hetherton 8 3 ... M Birch 4
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 7-4 Bolero Boy, 5-2 Great Ovation, 5-1 Mayfair, Foot Battalion, 6-1 Beryllium, 25-1 Sodelk
1995: no corresponding race

FORM GUIDE

GREAT OVATION gained a debut win in a three-runner Yarmouth maiden and followed up with a decent performance at Kempton when beating Musical Dancer a length with the third, Tuscany, trailing by five lengths. Musical Dancer only last week ran second to Grapeshot in a Listed race at Newmarket, so Great Ovation's Sandown performance nine days after Kempton when a 14-length sixth of seven to Brave Act is inexplicable. That form is too bad to be true and and it is worth risking that he can bounce back here. Bolero Boy won a five-furlong maiden at Newcastle in May but has since run better in defeat, notably when a length and a quarter second to Blues Queen in an Ayr nursery when drawn wide. Six furlongs may be his best trip but he has been tried at a mile and was a fair fourth over this seven furlongs in the August nursery won by Pension Fund. Beryllium's seems a bit below what is required, but he may be improving, judged on a recent Chester win over Calypso Grant and Bally Souza. Foot Battalion has been in good form for most of his nine-race campaign and had a stiffish task at the weights against the winner, I Can't Remember, in a Chester nursery last time, while Mayfair was disappointing at Goodwood (Group Three) after taking a five-runner Ascot maiden from Sleepless. Selection: GREAT OVATION

2.30 BODDINGTONS MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £8,000 added 3YO 1m 2f 85yds Penalty Value £6,316

1 BONANZA PEAK (Golden Arrow SA G Ozan & J Cecil) Mrs J Cecil 9 0 ... K Darley 5
2 22 MULTICOLOURED (46) (BF) (Ld Weinstock/Exors of S Weinstock) M Stoute 9 0 ... J Reid 1
3 5323 *PEP TALK (USA) (40) (K Abdullah) H Cecil 9 0* ... *Pat Eddery 8*
4 0 SACRED LOCH (USA) (28) (Athos Christodoulou) G Harwood 9 0 ... A Clark 2
5 6 TIUTCHEV (12) (Lady Rothschild) R Charlton 9 0 ... R Hughes 7
6 03 ENRICHED (22) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 8 9 ... L Dettori 3
7 452 GRAND SPLENDOUR (13) (Mrs H Al Maktoum) Lady Herries 8 9 ... K Fallon 6
8 0 QUESTING STAR (14) (A E Oppenheimer) G Wragg 8 9 ... M Hills 9
9 6 SURUF (18) (Hamdan Al Maktoum) D Morley 8 9 ... R Hills 4
10 TUMI (USA) (Shaikh Mohammed) J Gosden 8 9 ... J Carroll 10
– 10 declared –

BETTING: 9-4 Pep Talk, 5-2 Multicoloured, 3-1 Enriched, 8-1 Grand Splendour, 14-1 Tumi, Sufuf, 16-1 others
1995: Mokaiaber 3 9 0 L Dettori evens (J Gosden) 8 ran

FORM GUIDE

ENRICHED can maintain John Gosden's good run. She is a scopey sort sure to be more effective now that she has a couple of runs behind her. Enriched was in need of the experience when seventh (of 11) on her Newbury debut in April, but travelled strongly for much of the 11 furlongs and then ran third to Congo Man in a 10-furlong Sandown maiden, again shaping as if sure to do better in time. Multicoloured shaped well on his Windsor debut and should pay to follow. Pep Talk is by Lyphard out of Cheshire Oaks winner Peplum and has displayed useful form in maidens, finishing second over nine furlongs at Redcar and then third to Triple Leap over 10 furlongs at Ripon. He can make the frame again. Tiutchev is a useful-looking son of Soviet Star and there are some good bloodlines on the dam's side. He looked green when a 12-length sixth to Naazeq in a Haydock maiden 13 days ago but will do well to reverse the form with the Haydock second, Grand Splendour. Sufuf showed promise on her debut at Lingfield and is another to watch. Selected: ENRICHED

3.00 ALLIED DUNBAR RATED HANDICAP (CLASS B) £12,750 added 7f Penalty Value £8,053

1 3-43011 STAR OF ZILZAL (USA) (18) (D) (Maktoum Al Maktoum) M Stoute 4 9 7 ... A Clark 1
2 2-03103 VERZEN (34) (D) (Saeed Manana) D Loder 4 9 5 ... D R McCabe 7
3 10-5430 CELESTIAL KEY (USA) (12) (D) (M J Brodrick) M Johnston 6 9 5 ... J Weaver 5
4 00-0145 WELTON ARSENAL (131) (D) (Business Forms Express) M Channon 4 8 11 ... R Hughes 3
5 420001 HIGHBORN (6) (D) (Yorkshire Racing Owners Group 1990) P Felgate 7 8 9 (5ex) ... W Ryan 4
6 042010 PRIMO LARA (12) (D) (Thanet Leasing Limited) P Harris 4 8 7 ... G Hind 2
7 2-51410 AERLEON JANE (12) (D) (Paul H Locke) J Gosden 3 8 5 ... L Dettori 6
– 7 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Star Of Zilzal, 3-1 Verzen, 9-2 Aerleon Jane, 6-1 Celestial Key, Highborn, 8-1 Welton Arsenal, 10-1 Primo Lara
1995: Hi Nod 5 9 0 L Charnock 4-1 (M Camacho) 6 ran

FORM GUIDE

The untrustworthy Welton Arsenal is more likely to run placed than actually win (he did land a minor event at Warwick in April), while Verzen has ability but is another who fails to instil confidence with his awkward head carriage. He won a four-runner rated stakes at Yarmouth in July by six lengths and ran a fine third to Centre Stalls in Listed company at Kempton last time, but the selection goes to AERLEON JANE, who is bound to be popular with John Gosden and Frankie Dettori in great heart. Aerleon Jane gained her wins in April and May, the second one a decent Sandown handicap, and she came back from a four-month absence to be 10th of 18 to Fatefully in a fillies' handicap (Listed) over the Ascot mile. Her 10th of 18 hardly tells the whole story because she was just beginning to improve when forced to *check over two furlongs out. Highborn looked in tip-top shape when winning a rated stakes* at Newmarket (a 25-1 shot) six days ago and a small penalty hardly rules him out although Primo Lara had four and a half lengths in hand of him in a Haydock handicap the time before. Star Of Zilzal looks vulnerable at the weights but he is coming off wins at Goodwood and Epsom and the defeat of Nagnagnag at Epsom was praiseworthy given that Tony Clark may have been hampered by a slipping saddle. Celestial Key is a stone better off for the six and a quarter lengths by which Star Of Zilzal beat him at Goodwood last month and this tough type can make his presence felt. Selection: AERLEON JANE

3.30 SASHA LYONS BIRTHDAY CLAIMING STAKES (CLASS D) £8,000 added 1m 2f 85yds Penalty Value £6,316

1 605100 HAZARD A GUESS (50) (D) (Consultco Ltd) D Nicholls 6 9 4 ... Alex Greaves 3
2 220-110 NORTHERN FAN (28) (Speedish Group) N Tinkler 4 9 2 ... K Darley 8
3 040040 CZARNA (27) (Mrs Sean M Collins) C Britain 5 8 11 ... B Doyle 6
4 0-22546 TEN PAST SIX (103) (J S Kennerley and Miss J Hall) M Wane 4 8 11 ... M Hills 9
5 000350 LEIF THE LUCKY (USA) (40) (Miss Betty Duxbury) Miss S Hall 7 8 8 ... Martin Dwyer (5) 7
6 466006 NOBBY BARNES (36) (Don Enrico Incisa) Don Enrico Incisa 7 8 6 ... Kim Tinkler 11
7 350453 QUIET ARCH (7) (R M Cyzer) C Cyzer 3 8 6 ... G Carter 5
8 544056 *SAMIM (USA) (5) (R A Redrolle) S Gollings 3 8 6* ... *K Fallon 1 B*
9 420030 WITHERKAY (8) (G C Sampson) R Hannon 3 8 6 ... Dane O'Neill 4
10 000000 *BROWNIE'S PROMISE (17) (Eclipse Management Ltd) M Brittain 3 8 1* ... *G Bardwell 2 V*
11 005000 REALMS OF GLORY (81) (Derek Crowson) P Mitchell 3 8 1 ... J Quinn 10
– 11 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Hazard A Guess, 7-2 Ten Past Six, 5-1 Czarna, 6-1 Northern Fan, 7-1 Quiet Arch, 8-1 Leif The Lucky, 12-1 others
1995: Mellottie 10 9 7 K Darley 10-11 (Mrs M Reveley) 12 ran

FORM GUIDE

Ten furlongs (plus 85 yards) may not be the the ideal distance for Czarna, who has a big chance if he does stay. He ran well in better company at Newmarket and Newbury in the spring although those runs were over seven furlongs or thereabouts. If Czarna fails to get home, it will not matter that HAZARD A GUESS must concede 7lb to him. Now a six-year-old, Hazard A Guess holds his form well and has probably even improved with each year. The race in which he was ninth here last time was run at a false pace but he is well suited by this trip and won handicaps at Kempton in April and Newcastle in August. Leif The Lucky possibly failed to stay the extended 12 furlongs at Ripon last time but he has gained all his five wins on an easy surface and a drop more rain would make a big difference to him. Samim (ex John Dunlop) is difficult to assess at present. Selection: HAZARD A GUESS

4.00 GREEN HOWARDS CUP (NURSERY HANDICAP) (CLASS C) £8,000 added 2YO 1m Penalty Value £6,992

1 104402 FLETCHER (31) (HRH Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 9 7 ... T Quinn 3
2 514 SHIMAZU (91) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 9 3 ... L Dettori 11
3 514 MR BOMBASTIQUE (68) (K Al-Said) B Hills 9 2 ... M Hills 2
4 0653 INDIFFERENT GUY (21) (W J Gredley) C Brittain 9 1 ... B Doyle 9
5 151363 NORTHERN SUN (14) (Tony Murray) T Mills 9 0 ... J Reid 6
6 366110 GENERAL'S STAR (28) (CD) (Saeed Suhail) M Stoute 8 13 ... K Darley 5 V
7 063333 MARADI (21) (Hamdan Al Maktoum) D Morley 8 8 ... R Hills 14
8 68102 LOVE HAS NO PRIDE (USA) (14) (Miss L Regis) R Hannon 8 7 ... Dane O'Neill 1
9 623001 IMPERIAL OR METRIC (17) (D) (Clayton Bigley Partnership Ltd) J Berry 8 7 ... G Carter 15
10 532323 SANDBAGGEDAGAIN (20) (BF) (Mrs C Hanbury) M W Easterby 8 5 ... J Carroll 16
11 2203 PRINCESS TOPAZ (28) (Stephen Crown) C Cyzer 8 3 ... J Quinn 7
12 0236 HURGILL DANCER (20) (The Hurgill Lodge Partnership) J W Watts 8 1 ... J F Egan 13
13 405 HIGHWAY ROBBER (54) (J C Smith) J Eustace 8 1 ... Martin Dwyer (5) 17
14 226461 SMUGURS (15) (Mugs R Us) R Williams 7 11 ... D Wright (3) 8
15 034631 GIPSY PRINCESS (19) (Lady Manton) M W Easterby 7 10 ... L Charnock 4 B
16 0555 AUCTION HALL (16) (Cheveley Park Stud) M Bell 7 10 ... R Mullen (7) 12
17 45046 FLOATING DEVON (56) (Chas D Calvert) T Easterby 7 10 ... G Bardwell 10
– 17 declared –

Minimum weight: 7st 10lb. True handicap weight: Floating Devon 7st 1lb.
BETTING: 3-1 Shimazu, 6-1 Fletcher, 8-1 Sandbaggedagain, Northern Sun, 10-1 Mr Bombastique, Princess Topaz, 12-1 others
1995: Weet-A-Minute 2 9 3 L Dettori 13-2 (R Hollinshead) 11 ran

FORM GUIDE

The 9st 7lb might be enough to persuade the temperamental Fletcher to down tools, but this is tough nursery in which SANDBAGGEDAGAIN does, at least, seem assured of the strong gallop that he needs. He is capable of good form given a strongly run race and he found the ideal conditions in a mile nursery at Doncaster two outings back when a length second of 17 to Al Azhar, with Princess Topaz a one-paced third and General's Star eighth. He went off 5-4 favourite in an Ayr nursery last time, but was only third to Foxes Tail (Hurgill Dancer sixth) after a less testing gallop. Love Has No Pride stays the trip, but has had the pace to win over six furlongs at Brighton. He can go well along with Shimazu (tried in Listed company), Indifferent Guy and Northern Sun. Selection: SANDBAGGEDAGAIN

4.30 BADGER HILL APPRENTICE HANDICAP (CLASS E) £8,000 added 1m 4f Penalty Value £7,096

1 0-40000 DREAMS END (36) (D) (T G Price) P Bowen 8 10 0 ... R Cody-Boutcher (7) 3
2 032232 VOILA PREMIERE (4) (BF) (B W Gaule) M Tompkins 4 9 10 ... R Mullen (3) 9
3 2203-30 KALOU (22) (D) (Sir Tatton Sykes) W Elsey 5 9 9 ... P Fessey 16
4 553214 TIBBY (54) (D) (HRH Prince Fahd Salman) P Cole 3 9 6 ... David O'Neill (7) 2
5 0-22351 AMADOUR (8) (D) (Derek Crowson) P Mitchell 3 9 5 (5ex) ... D Griffiths 19
6 36-6656 HOME COUNTIES (68) (Rosy Cinemas (Dalton) Ltd) D Moffatt 7 9 4 ... C Adamson 21
7 111210- CLAIRESWAN (392) (Claire and Beryl) M Tompkins 4 9 2 ... G Milligan (3) 22
8 33-5604 KARISMA (94) (D Vic Roper) Denys Smith 3 9 2 ... A Daly 20
9 001206 RING OF VISION (21) (P D Savill) Mrs M Reveley 4 9 1 ... G Lee 6
10 51050-4 MAD MILITANT (19) (D) (K Nicholls) A Streeter 7 8 13 ... D Denby (5) 12
11 0-32050 MASTER HYDE (USA) (19) (D) (D Callaghan) W Storey 7 8 12 ... D Sweeney (3) 4 V
12 161511 KRISTAL BREEZE (8) (D) (S Lamb) W Muir 4 8 12 (5ex) ... J Wilkinson (5) 15
13 101121 GLOW FORUM (19) (D) (Andy J Smith) L Montague Hall 5 8 10 ... Martin Dwyer 8
14 015060 CLAIRE'S DANCER (23) (Mrs Claire Hollowood) A Turnell 3 8 10 ... C Webb (5) 17
15 206015 DOUBLE ECHO (9) (C) (D) (Mrs John Lee) J Bethell 8 8 9 ... G Faulkner (3) 13
16 465400 HASTA LA VISTA (31) (D) (K Hodgson) M W Easterby 6 8 9 ... G Parkin 18 B
17 000401 EL BARDADOR (22) (The Spotted Hats) W Jarvis 3 8 8 ... P Roberts 14 B
18 050003 ASHOVER (3) (D) (Timothy Cox) T D Barron 6 8 7 ... J Dennis (5) 11
19 560020 ROCK THE BARNEY (8) (D) (BF) (Mrs Susan Marks) P Burgoyne 7 8 7 ... J Bosley (7) 7
20 412320 VOICES IN THE SKY (20) (D) (J A F Cairns) A Newcombe 5 8 6 ... R Ffrench (5) 5
21 815315 GOLD DESIRE (22) (C) (BF) (Northgate Lodge Racing) M Brittain 6 8 6 ... J Fowle (7) 10
22 000210 DAUPHIN (20) (D) (Mrs Rita Brown) W Musson 3 7 10 ... M Baird 1
– 22 declared –

BETTING: 8-1 Voila Premiere, 9-1 Ashover, 10-1 Kristal Breeze, Mad Militant, 12-1 Gold Desire, Amadour, 14-1 others
1995: Ayunli 4 9 3 A Daly 5-1 (S Williams) 21 ran

FORM GUIDE

Kalou won at Thirsk last September and made a belated reappearance in the corresponding race, running well to be third of 19 to Far Ahead. She was below that form when eighth of 14 at Beverley last time and the one who takes the eye is Martin Dwyer's mount GLOW FORUM, an improved mare this year. She has won four of her six starts this term and the Wolverhampton win from All On last time reads well in view of that rival's subsequent comfortable all-weather success. Ashover ran placed in this race last year and is back to form, judged on Monday's Pontefract third to Howqua River in a race he won two years ago. Dreams End would not be the easiest horse to catch right these days, but he can go well in this company along with in-form runners like Kristal Breeze and El Bardador. Selection: GLOW FORUM

WINCANTON

HYPERION

2.10 Kesanta 2.40 Southerly Gale 3.10 Indrapura 3.40 Lake Of Loughrea 4.10 Cointosser 4.40 Courbaril

GOING: Firm.
■ Right-hand, galloping course. Run-in of 200yd.
■ Course is NE of town on B3081. Templecombe station (service from London, Waterloo) 4m. ADMISSION: Members £12.50 (Juniors, 17 to 22 years, £6.50); Tattersalls £8; Course (and cars to course) £4. (Under-16s free all enclosures). CAR PARK: Free.

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: None.
WINNERS IN LAST SEVEN DAYS: Cointosser (4.10) won at Taunton on Thursday.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Yellow Dragon (4.10) has been sent 136 miles by Brian Pearce from Limpsfield, Surrey.

2.10 HATHERLEIGH MARES MAIDEN HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 6f

1 0245 GALATASORI JANE (98) P Nicholls 6 11 0 ... O Burrows (7)
2 22A12 KESANTA (11) W G M Turner 6 11 0 ... R Dunwoody
3 2-P5524 UP THE TEMPO (43) Paddy Farrell 7 11 0 ... J Culloty
4 2 KYMIN (44) D Murray Smith 4 10 13 ... A P McCoy
– 4 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 Kesanta, 5-2 Galatasori Jane, Kymin, 16-1 Up The Tempo

2.40 OAK CONDITIONALS HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £4,000 added 3m 1f 110yds

1 216-212 SOUTHERLY GALE (68) (BF) M Pipe 9 11 12 ... G Supple (4)
2 234211- MAREMMA GALE (140) (C) N R Mitchell 8 11 10 ... K Gaule B
3 2P4-PPP BANNTOWN BILL (21) (CD) M Pipe 7 11 7 ... D Walsh B
4 525-021 DRUMCULLEN (20) K Bailey 7 11 0 ... T J Murphy
5 12258-5 FOXGROVE (11) (D) R Price 10 10 8 ... D Fortt
6 554-63P L'UOMO PIU (11) A Barrow 12 10 8 ... T Dascombe V
7 83-0145 TURPIN'S GREEN (9) J King 13 10 0 ... J Culloty
– 7 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Turpin's Green 9st 11lb.
BETTING: 7-4 Southerly Gale, 5-2 Maremma Gale, 3-1 Drumcullen, 8-1 Foxgrove, 10-1 Turpin's Green, 16-1 Banntown Bill, L'Uomo Piu

3.10 SOUTH-WEST RACING CLUB NOVICE H'CAP HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m

1 111 INDRAPURA (19) M Pipe 4 11 13 ... C Maude
2 P30006- SAILEP (180) R Hodges 4 11 4 ... T Dascombe (3)
3 4-522 CANARY FALCON (35) R O'Sullivan 5 11 1 ... P Holley
4 6P054R- INDIAN CROWN (156) N Thomson 6 10 0 ... J Culloty
5 0/P00-0 TIBBS INN (12) A Barrow 7 10 0 ... Mr R Thornton (7)
– 5 declared –

Minimum: 10st. True h'cap weights: Indian Crown 9st 13lb, Tibbs Inn 9st 10lb.
BETTING: 4-5 Indrapura, 11-4 Canary Falcon, 5-1 Sailep, 12-1 Indian Crown, 33-1 Tibbs Inn

3.40 POT BLACK HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS D) £6,000 added 2m 5f

1 51813-F LAKE OF LOUGHREA (8) K Bailey 6 11 10 ... C O'Dwyer
2 1521-1F HERBERT BUCHANAN (11) (D BF) P Nicholls 6 11 4 ... A P McCoy
3 0/P211 BIT OF A TOUCH (11) (D) R Frost 10 10 9 ... J Frost
4 536P53 GABISH (7) B Scriven 11 10 0 ... Mr R Thornton (7)
– 4 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weight: Gabish 8st 5lb.
BETTING: 6-4 Herbert Buchanan, 7-4 Bit Of A Touch, 5-2 Lake Of Loughrea, 33-1 Gabish

4.10 SHAFTESBURY NOVICE CLAIMING HURDLE (CLASS F) £3,000 added 3YO 2m

1 33 YELLOW DRAGON (24) B Pearce 11 1 ... K Gaule (3)
2 3124 BEN BOWDEN (9) M Saunders 10 13 ... J Osborne
3 1 COINTOSSER (7) M Pipe 10 12 ... S Wynne
4 PROVE THE POINT Mrs N Dudfield 10 8 ... P Holley
5 2 INDIRA (7) P Murphy 10 6 ... W McFarland
6 60 REMEMBER STAR (19) A Smith 10 6 ... F Jousset
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 5-4 Cointosser, 7-4 Indira, 5-1 Ben Bowden, Yellow Dragon, 20-1 Prove The Point, 33-1 Remember Star

4.40 WINCANTON NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 added 2m 6f

1 121 COURBARIL (8) M Pipe 4 11 12 ... C Maude
2 PU6/ ASK HARRY (500) R Alner 5 10 9 ... P Henley (5)
3 114F-30 CHARGED (11) P Hobbs 7 10 9 ... A P McCoy
4 4044P3 MIRAMARE (24) C Popham 6 10 9 ... T Dascombe (3)
5 00- LADY NESS (224) J Tuck 5 10 4 ... R Bellamy
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 4-9 Courbaril, 4-1 Charged, 7-1 Miramare, 14-1 Ask Harry, 25-1 Lady Ness

LUDLOW

HYPERION

2.20 King Of Babylon 2.50 Holy Wanderer 3.20 Tallywagger 3.50 Blue Raven 4.20 Sigma Run 4.50 Mine's An Ace 5.20 Andsome Boy

GOING: Firm.
■ Right-hand course. Chase course has sharp bends.
■ Racecourse is NW of town off A49. Ludlow station (Hereford – Shrewsbury line) 2m. ADMISSION: Club £14 (accompanied under-16s free); Tattersalls £8; Course £5. CAR PARK: Free.

SIS RACING CHANNEL

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Don Du Cadran (3.20), Little Kenny (5.20, visored).
WINNERS IN LAST SEVEN DAYS: Blue Raven (3.50) won at Taunton on Thursday.
LONG-DISTANCE RUNNERS: Tallywagger (3.20) has been sent 163 miles by G M Moore from Middleham, North Yorkshire.

2.20 SCANIA 4-SERIES SELLING HANDICAP H'DLE (CLASS G) £2,500 2m 5f 110yds

1 /06 DANE ROSE (11) M Sheppard 10 11 10 ... A Maguire
2 0-34326 KING OF BABYLON (20) F Jordan 4 11 9 ... L Aspell (3)
3 0-5P52P LAC DE GRAS (24) R Curtis 5 11 3 ... D Morris
4 004030 THEY ALL FORGOT ME (20) A Carroll 9 10 13 ... Miss C Dyson
5 0PP-03R SIESTA TIME (8) D Burchell 6 10 7 ... D J Burchell
6 0P/0/6- AWESTRUCK (322) B Preece 6 10 6 ... G Hogan (3) B
– 6 declared –

BETTING: 2-1 Siesta Time, 9-4 King Of Babylon, 9-2 Lac De Gras, 7-1 Dane Rose, 8-1 They All Forgot Me, Awestruck

2.50 KNIGHTON TRUCKS FOR SCANIA NOVICE CHASE (CLASS E) £4,500 added 2m

1 115P-3P RYTON RUN (8) Mrs S Odell 11 11 9 ... B Fenton
2 34356P/ CHAPEL OF BARRAS (622) B Gee 7 11 5 ... B Powell
3 112-F03 HOLY WANDERER (4) T George 7 11 5 ... G Hogan (3)
4 0245P-P LAURA LYE (12) B De Haan 6 11 0 ... J Railton
5 4610PP- TENAYESTELIGN (148) D Marks 8 11 0 ... J A McCarthy
– 5 declared –

BETTING: 4-7 Holy Wanderer, 4-1 Tenayestelign, 9-2 Ryton Run, 10-1 Laura Lye, 20-1 Chapel Of Barras

3.20 RADIO SHROPSHIRE STAYERS' H'CAP HURDLE (CLASS D) £3,750 3m 2f 110yds

1 121-4F1 TALLYWAGGER (19) (D) G M Moore 9 12 0 ... N Bentley
2 15/33-54 DON DU CADRAN (14) T Forster 7 10 7 ... A Thornton B
3 0F-0013 HOLY JOE (12) (C) D Burchell 14 10 7 ... D J Burchell
4 400-344 STORM DRUM (11) (C) K Bailey 7 10 0 ... Mr R Wakley (7)
5 F21P- NATHAN BLAKE (372) (C) W G M Turner 11 10 0 ... J Power (7) B
6 031324 GEORGE ASHFORD (28) P Johnson 8 10 0 ... A S Smith
– 6 declared –

Minimum weight: 10st. True handicap weights: Storm Drum 9st 13lb, Nathan Blake 9st 10lb, George Ashford 9st 9lb.
BETTING: 6-4 Tallywagger, 3-1 Holy Joe, 5-1 Don du Cadran, George Ashford, 7-1 Storm Drum, 16-1 Nathan Blake

3.50 SCANIA TRUCK OF THE YEAR NOVICE H'CAP CHASE (CLASS E) £5,000 2m 4f

1 352231 BLUE RAVEN (7) D Bloor 5 12 3 (7ex) ... A Maguire
2 44560-4 ON THE TEAR (26) F Lloyd 10 10 4 ... C Llewellyn
3 056-346 SCRIPT (12) J Jenkins 5 10 4 ... W Marston
4 5/0-3 LITTLE BY LITTLE (26) B Preece 6 10 3 ... A Thornton
– 4 declared –

BETTING: 2-5 Blue Raven, 4-1 Script, 8-1 On The Tear, Little By Little

4.20 SCANIA INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGE NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,000 2m

1 66/P60- JON'S CHOICE (349) B Preece 8 10 12 ... C Llewellyn
2 0F56U0- SIGMA RUN (157) J Edwards 7 10 12 ... T Hazlett
3 SUPERENSIS John Berry 6 10 12 ... T Wheeler
4 P/ ANDY COIN (516) W Brisbourne 5 10 7 ... J Titley
– 4 declared –

BETTING: 1-3 Sigma Run, 3-1 Superensis, 7-1 Jon's Choice, 33-1 Andy Coin

4.50 KNIGHTON TRUCKS 'KNOW-HOW' HANDICAP CHASE (CLASS F) £3,600 2m 4f

1 601222 DRUMSTICK (24) (D) K Bailey 10 11 10 ... J Railton
2 124232- MINE'S AN ACE (131) (CD) Miss V Williams 9 11 9 ... N Williamson
3 4130/3-3 CRACKLING FROST (34) Mrs D Haine 8 10 2 ... J F Titley
– 3 declared –

BETTING: 4-7 Drumstick, 9-4 Mine's An Ace, 6-1 Crackling Frost

5.20 SCANIA 'KING OF THE ROAD' NOVICE HURDLE (CLASS E) £3,250 3YO 2m

1 33 ANDSOME BOY (8) C Barwell 10 12 ... B Clifford
2 43 BATH KNIGHT (26) D Burchell Dawe 10 12 ... A Maguire B
3 CHILLINGTON W Brisbourne 10 12 ... C Llewellyn
4 4 COLEBROOK WILLIE (7) J Bosley 10 12 ... M Bosley
5 03 GHOSTLY APPARITION (7) John R Upson 10 12 ... R Supple
6 HEVER GOLF DIAMOND T Naughton 10 12 ... N Williamson
7 LAUGHING BUCCANEER D Carey 10 12 ... B Powell
8 FORMENTIERE J Bradley 10 7 ... B Fenton
9 0 LITTLE KENNY (33) T Wall 10 7 ... R Massey (3) V
– 9 declared –

BETTING: 5-2 Andsome Boy, 4-1 Formentiere, Hever Golf Diamond, 5-1 Ghostly Apparition, 6-1 Colebrook Willie, 7-1 Bath Knight, 14-1 others

Obree's riding position banned

Cycling
ROBIN NICHOLL
reports from Lugano

Graeme Obree again has world cycling back-pedalling. After Olympic and world titles and records have been taken using his his "Superman" racing style, the Union Cycliste Internationale are banning the extended handlebars he designed to suit the style.

A new ruling will limit the extensions to 15cm, which is half the length of the bars Obree used to regain the world 4,000 metres pursuit title last year.

"We want riders to win because they are the best, rather than because they have the best equipment," the UCI president, Hein Verbruggen, said.

"As far as I am concerned they are not putting riders' interests first," Obree said. "If I am going to get hassled what is the point in racing." He has already hinted that he might retire to concentrate on marketing adjustable versions of his handlebars.

Obree devised the style which has the arms outstretched ahead of the rider, and, in his case, his hands level with the front of his wheel. Chris Boardman used it to take the world 4,000 metres title and then the world hour record.

Today Obree is chasing his second world title of the year against a strong local challenge from Alex Zülle and Tony Rominger.

Britain's best display on the opening day of the world road championships was a good sign for Boardman. Paul Manning, who partnered the world champion to a recent victory, finished 10th in the Under-23 time trial, 2min 39sec off the winning pace of Italy's Luca Sironi.

Yvonne McGregor was 16th in the women's 26.4km time trial, 2:45 slower than the French winner, Jeannie Longo, who, at 38, took her 11th world gold.

Results, Digest, page 31

Second false start fears for regatta

Sailing
STUART ALEXANDER
reports from Barcelona

A regatta that has already struggled to get off the mark was dealt another massive blow last night as the international jury at the Glenfiddich Gold Cup in Barcelona considered throwing out the only race so far completed by the 47 Melges 24s from 10 countries.

There had been no racing on the opening day as the breeze off the Olympic port refused to arrive and the competitors were in no mood to be disciplined at the start yesterday. So, after two attempts which had to be abandoned for a general recall, the race officer raised a warning black flag promising immediate disqualification for any miscreant.

First to the top mark was the Tornado sailor Rob White, who had to sail with a crew of three rather than four since they took 306 of the maximum 345.5 kilos and could not find a fourth crewman weighing less than 40kg. But making the best of the conditions was an American, Dave Chapin, Florida-based but racing a Melges out of Annapolis.

Second was the local man Luis-Martinez Doreste, with the now 60-year-old Olympic silver medallist Keith Musto carrying British colours into third. But the rules-conscious British then pointed out that several boats had been in the triangle of the course illegally after the five-minute warning and should be disqualified, raising the possibility of no results for the second day running.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Rugby League
(7.30 unless stated)
TOUR MATCHES: Cumbria v Australian Aboriginals (at Barrow); Lion Red Cup XIII v Great Britain (at Carlaw Park, NZ, 7.30am)

Basketball
BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Playboy TV Leopards v Derby Storm (7.0)

Speedway
BILLY SANDERS INTERNATIONAL TROPHY (individual, Ipswich).

Other sports
GOLF: Alfred Dunhill Cup (St Andrews).
TENNIS: LTA Satellite (Sheffield).

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sport

His talent plus nerve equals potential to surpass even the feats of Jack Nicklaus and dwarf what anyone has made from the game

It is not that long ago since the member of a golf club in this country put forward its principal virtues as follows: no blacks, no jews, no catholics, and very little encouragement for women.

When you think of how much Semtex there appears to be hanging around in the world it's a wonder somebody hasn't blown the place up, because what we are talking about here is deep-rooted racial, religious and sexual prejudice, which is still all too common in golfing circles.

For obvious reasons, no club goes public with this but, bet your life, some continue to operate a hidden agenda, meaning that unwanted applicants for membership are discouraged from putting their names forward. In any number of cases black players have simply been headed off at the pass.

Recent exciting news from the United States served to bring rotten discrimination into sharper focus. It was that the black American golf prodigy, Tiger Woods, had won the Las Vegas Invitational in only his fifth week on the professional circuit.

So what will golf's bigots make of the 20-year old Californian who this week stands 75th in the world rankings, a top 100 place achieved in record time? Here, possibly, is the next golfing superstar. From finishing 60th in his first professional tournament, Woods improved to 11th, fifth and third before defeating Davis Love III last Sunday at the first play-off hole.

Talent plus nerve equals potential to surpass even the feats of Jack Nicklaus and dwarf what anyone has ever made from the game. Three times the US amateur champion, when Woods took off as a professional he was guaranteed $40m (£26m) by Nike over five years. Few will be surprised if his career earnings exceed $5m before his 25th birthday.

And yet there are golf clubs in the US where Woods knows he is not welcome. He knows that as Lee Elder and Calvin Peete knew it, too. Yes, even as the swarthy-featured Lee Trevino knew it. Prejudice, concealed expediently during tournaments but never far beneath the surface.

When Woods made his first appearance in the Masters last year some considered him to be less than sufficiently humbled by the invitation. They wanted to hear more from him than that Augusta National is a marvellous golf course and that it was a thrill to be in the company of great players. Make no mistake, there were those who wanted Woods to touch his forelock.

KEN JONES

It serves to make the fulfilment of Woods's tremendous potential all the more desirable. Certainly, I like to think, the effect of such a breakthrough would be enormous in a game that is still plagued by the most repugnant of attitudes.

A healthy sign is that the galleries following Woods grow ever larger. No wonder. It's a damn sight more than just the novelty of his nascent fame, the publicity that surrounds him. Above all else, typical of sport today, the spectators thrill to his quite astonishing power. "Comes from the wide arc of his swing," the British former tournament player, Warren Humphreys, said last when working for Sky television.

In common with everyone who saw it, Humphreys gasped when Woods sent his ball 300 yards with a three-wood, all carry. "Astonishing," he said. But there is more to winning tournaments than distance. There is the touch, judgement and nerve that persuades any number of Woods's contemporaries that he is exceptional.

The most important racial breakthrough in American sport, probably in sport anywhere, came almost half a century ago when Jackie Robinson broke the colour bar in Major League baseball. But long after, when Robinson was at the height of his fame with the Brooklyn Dodgers, white faces were turned against him.

Woods will experience nothing so strikingly evident of racial discrimination in sport. But it still exists. It exists in country clubs and golf's inner circle. It exists in the minds of prejudiced people who must view Woods's sensational progress with a great deal of trepidation. The best player in the world a black man? Spare us the thought, you can hear them saying.

Fortunately, it appears that Woods has the temperament to go with his great ability. The pressure is there, it is not just, but the trick will be to go on winning. "Go get 'em, Tiger," a young white boy called out to Woods at last year's Masters. Woods smiled across at him. It was lovely.

Hill must rediscover boldness

Derick Allsop gathers opinion on how Britain's world champion in waiting can crush the doubters and clinch the title on Sunday

Damon Hill may find it easier securing the drivers' title on Sunday than winning the universal acclaim befitting a world champion.

The British driver requires just a point from the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka, and given the superiority of the Williams-Renault he has only to stay out of trouble and finish the race to manage that. Even that modest task will not be necessary if his team-mate and rival, Jacques Villeneuve, achieves anything less than victory.

A sensible course, however, may not be sufficient to convince many members of the Formula One fraternity and the watching public he is worthy of motor racing's ultimate prize. Hill has heaped this scepticism upon himself in the two races since he was informed he would not be retained by Williams for next season. He tossed away the opportunity to wrap up the championship in Italy, and did so again when he surrendered to an inspired Villeneuve in Portugal.

All the old doubts and, perhaps, prejudices returned. Suddenly his early season domination was seen in a different context. The car was so good no other team had a look-in and Villeneuve was too new to Formula One to represent a serious threat. In the later stages Villeneuve has blossomed, his growing familiarity with the team, the car and grand prix racing drawing his vibrant talent into the open.

Martin Brundle, the acknowledged sage of the drivers' union, articulated the thoughts of many compatriots when he said: "I hope Damon actually goes out and wins it, and doesn't just let it come to him.

"I think that overall this season he deserves to get the championship and I hope he does, but I really believe he needs to be seen to win it in style, from the front.

"It's fair to say there is a general feeling something has gone from Damon's racing and his challenge in recent grands prix and that if he came in fifth or sixth it would not have a lot of value. It would actually be rather meaningless.

"It would be understandable if Damon played safe but that might be asking for trouble. It's the same in all sports. When you take it easy you are liable to get hurt. When you hesitate on a race track you are likely to make contact with another car.

"It's an entirely different situation for Villeneuve. He's got to win, he knows he's got to go for it, and he can go into the race with that different mental approach. More often than not, when you've got nothing to lose it comes off for you, and the momentum is certainly with him."

Damon Hill won the 1994 Japanese Grand Prix and his fine drive in torrential rain earned congratulations from Michael Schumacher Photographs: Reuter

Brundle suggests Hill takes with him the winner's trophy from the 1994 Japanese Grand Prix as a lucky charm. "He should cuddle that trophy and hope it encourages him to be positive and put on the kind of performance he produced two years ago," the Jordan-Peugeot driver said. "He had to find something special that day and he did, in torrential rain, to beat Michael Schumacher. That's the kind of drive I'm sure his fans would like to see from him on Sunday."

The demon in Damon has been apparent too infrequently for Williams' liking, hence their decision to replace him with Heinz-Harald Frentzen, but Sunday's race could be tailor-made for the customary, composed drive by Hill – out in front.

John Watson, the former grand prix driver, believes, like Brundle, that Hill may be inviting trouble by curbing his natural instincts. Watson, now a television commentator, said: "When you know that all you need is a point it may be difficult to think in terms of going for a win, but in Damon's case I believe it may be the safest policy.

"If Damon gets pole, and he must have a good chance of that, and then gets a clean start, he should try to go away because when he's out in front he flows normally. He's comfortable there. His problems arise when he's caught up in traffic and has to overtake."

Watson, renowned for his overtaking prowess during his Formula One days, offered Hill a little advice to arm him should he be trapped by the pack. "You have to make up your mind you are going to pass and send out a clear message that you are coming through," he said. "You have to let the other guy know it's going to happen, no matter what.

"If Damon isn't getting the information he needs from his team to help him during the race he should be on the radio to them demanding to know. Schumacher talks incessantly to the pits. Damon has to assert himself in the same way."

Brundle and Watson will not be alone in looking for Hill to assert himself when the class of 1996 line up for the last time on Sunday.

■ The Japanese company Bridgestone announced yesterday they plan to provide tyres for Arrows in 1997, a year ahead of schedule.

Stricker short of local expertise

Golf

ANDY FARRELL reports from St Andrews

One of the requirements for the Alfred Dunhill Cup is to be familiar with the format. This might take most of a five-course meal at the Old Course Hotel, but being familiar with your team should be easier.

America are the top seeds by virtue of the fact that all three of their team are ranked in the top 15 in the world. Phil Mickelson, Mark O'Meara and Steve Stricker are, in fact, first, fourth and fifth respectively on the US money list.

However, there remains a doubt about their local knowledge. Mickelson, the captain, played the Old Course for the first time in last year's Open, when he was joint 40th, but Stricker did not play then. "Has Steve seen the course before?" Mickelson was asked. "Steve who?" he replied. "He played in the Open last year, didn't he?"

Nor was the 26-year-old, a four-time winner in the US this year, particularly sure where he was – the Firth of Forth was mentioned – but he does know why he is here. "The primary reason I wanted to play was the Old Course," he said. "It is not just the course. The whole town adds to the whole aura of St Andrews."

If golf's grande dame is the special attraction of the event, the format takes more explaining. "The first year we played I had no idea, and by the time I had figured it out, I was on the road," Nick Price, of Zimbabwe, said. "The year Canada won, we actually beat them but for some reason they beat the team which we lost to, and they went through."

Last year, Zimbabwe lost to Scotland in the final. This year the two teams have been drawn in the same group and only one can go through to Sunday's semi-finals and final. First there are three days of round-robin play, with matches played under the medal-matchplay format. That ensures no one can be secure of a win until they have negotiated the fearsome 17th.

Price has been suffering from a sinus infection and has played only five times since May. Greg Norman, the world No 1 and Australia's captain, has interrupted his business affairs to be here. He has some 28 course designs being worked on. "There is no need for me to jump on an airplane and fly around the world to play golf," he said.

Some did not have so far to come. Nick Faldo is missing from an England team that is unseeded for the first time in the 12-year history of the event. Barry Lane, Lee Westwood and Jonathan Lomas take up the struggle. Ian Woosnam and Bernhard Langer both leave their nations short of pedigree. Ireland, however, are in form and relaxed Colin Montgomerie leads the host nation's defence.

Monty once promised to go home if Scotland lost to Paraguay (they did), but there should be no danger of Scotland doing an Estonia here.

ALFRED DUNHILL CUP Round-robin group phase draw (Old Course, St Andrews, today) (* denotes seeded teams): **Group One** *United States (P Mickelson, M O'Meara, S Stricker); *Spain (D Borrego, I Gamdo, M Jimenez); England (B Lane, J Lomas, L Westwood); Italy (C Rocca, S Grappasonni, E Canonica). **Group Two** *Zimbabwe (N Price, M McNulty, T Johnstone); *Scotland (C Montgomerie, A Coltart, R Russell); India (G Ghei, A Sher, J Singh); Sweden (P Hedblom, J Sandelin, P Sjoland). **Group Three** *South Africa (E Els, R Goosen, W Westner); *Ireland (D Clarke, P Harrington, P McGinley); Canada (R Gibson, J Rutledge, R Todd); Wales (P Affleck, M Mouland, P Price). **Group Four** *Australia (G Norman, S Elkington, W Riley); *New Zealand (F Nobilo, G Turner, G Waite); Japan (H Mieshai, N Ozaki, K Takami), Germany (T Gogsele, S Struever, H-P Thusl).

Seeded teams will play medal matches against the non-seeded teams in their groups today and tomorrow. The seeded teams in each group will play each other on Saturday. The winners of Groups One and Two will meet in one semi-final on Sunday morning, the winners of Groups Three and Four meeting in the other. The final will be held on Sunday afternoon.

Atlanta's 'small profit'

Olympic Games

Olympic officials have denied reports that the privately funded Atlanta Games, which lacked the usual safety net of state financial support, lost money.

François Carrard, the director general, said the International Olympic Committee has yet to receive a financial report on the Games, but denied rumours of a deficit.

"We have not had a final account yet. There is talk of a modest profit but there is no talk of a deficit," he said.

John Krinsky, of the US Olympic Committee, added: "Good news for me is anything [in the] black."

FANTASY FOOTBALL

Check your scores every Wednesday and Sunday and watch out for our first transfer period, starting 23 October

THE INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

County future in doubt for West Indians

Cricket

Twenty leading West Indian players have been offered one-year contracts which might prevent their future involvement in English county cricket.

Steve Camacho, the chief executive of the West Indies Board of Control, said: "These contracts will ensure they remain at home to help raise the standard of club cricket, and to coach."

Among those offered contracts are Courtney Walsh and Carl Hooper, who are expected to return to play for Gloucestershire and Kent respectively next season. Philip August, the Gloucestershire chief executive, said yesterday: "The West Indies Board would like to put certain players on a one-year contract but nobody will be forced to sign. And if some players decide to return to county cricket they will certainly not be penalised by the West Indies authorities."

Walsh has not signed his two-year offer from Gloucestershire but the two parties have shaken on the deal. Hooper is in the middle of a two-year contract at Canterbury.

Australia and India fear their one-off Test starting today in New Delhi will not last five days. The pitch at the Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium is very worn and spinners are expected to dominate the game for the newly instituted Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

"This is the driest wicket I've seen even on the sub-continent. Winning the toss on this pitch will be a big advantage and I hope the pitch lasts five days," Mark Taylor, the Australian captain, said. His opposite number, Sachin Tendulkar, said: "The wicket is extremely dry and I too will elect to bat if I win the toss."

Rowell eyes Carling the kicker

Rugby Union

DAVID LLEWELLYN

At last England have some problems on the pitch not just off it. Twickenham and the English Professional Rugby Union Clubs are to meet tomorrow for what is hoped to be the definitive peace summit to settle the long-running dispute between the clubs and the game's rulers in England. As a gesture of goodwill Epruc decided yesterday to postpone the proposed breakaway from the Rugby Football Union by a majority of its 24-member clubs. Those two items of off-field news were almost, but not quite, shouldered aside by what must be regarded as a welcome selection conundrum for the England manager, Jack Rowell.

Rowell's ideal side would not contain a recognised place-kicker. It left him, therefore, looking at the possibility of turning to his former captain, Will Carling, as a place-kicker. Carling has stated his desire this season to play at stand-off for his country – a role he has filled twice for Harlequins. He will not be given the No 10 shirt by Rowell, but there is every chance Carling could be England's place-kicker when they take on Italy at Twickenham on 23 November. Carling, whose 53 points in 66 international appearances have come courtesy of 12 tries, has been Harlequins recognised goal-kicker this season and his 70-odd points have helped his side head the Courage League First Division.

He is the fourth-highest scorer in the country and since the three men above him Jon Callard, Gareth Rees and John Liley, were not at yesterday's England squad session at Bisham Abbey, Rowell was left with very little choice when it came to looking for a goal-kicker.

If he decides to ignore Paul Grayson, the present incumbent there is no other obvious candidate. Given that Rowell would also like to pick Tim Stimpson at full-back and Mike Catt at stand-off – neither of whom is a recognised place-kicker – it was no great surprise to hear the England manager say: "The temptation is to pick your best footballing team, but pragmatics say entering a serious game, let alone an international, without a proven place kicker is a risk. Will is just getting into it. It's difficult enough on the training pitch, but in the context of a game where pressure is on, it's another thing entirely."

Tellingly, Rowell added: "We would not doubt Will Carling's bottle in any way, no matter how big the crowd or the occasion and every week that Will plays he is getting a lot of practice at goal-kicking with Harlequins. Let's see how far he gets."

Rowell, who reiterated he will not name the new England captain until the Epruc-RFU row has been settled, is not yet committed to anything regarding the England team.

One name that may well start cropping up more frequently at selection meetings is the former Bath wing Jim Fallon, who joined Leeds rugby league club in 1992 but returned to union during the summer and now plays for his first club, Richmond. When Rowell was coach at Bath, he was a big fan of the powerful Fallon. Yesterday he said: "I think Fallon would have played for England a couple of years ago. We'd like to think it wasn't too late for him now. But it will take him a while to get used to union again."

Fallon made no secret of what he wanted. "I'd like to get an England cap," said the 30-year-old who has five England A caps to his credit. "I thought my chance had gone. But I have not been brought into this training squad just for the experience."

Capriati 'pleased' with form despite loss

Tennis

Jennifer Capriati managed only sporadic resistance as she lost in straight sets to Arantxa Sanchez Vicario, the world No 2, in the second round of the Filderstadt tournament in Germany yesterday.

Capriati, playing her first event since the US Open in August, produced plenty of her trademark booming forehands but also a large number of unforced errors in losing 6-4, 6-4.

The American, who has returned to the circuit part-time after a two-year break during which she battled against personal problems, scored a surprise straight-sets win over Natalia Zvereva in the first round but against the Spaniard she only briefly looked like averting the inevitable, when she held three break points at 4-5 down with Sanchez Vicario serving for the match.

Sanchez Vicario fought her way back to deuce with the help of an ace, which was ruled in by the umpire after the line-judge had called it out, and an unforced groundstroke error by Capriati.

Sanchez clinched the match on her first match point by pressuring Capriati into overhitting a volley.

Despite the defeat the 20-year-old 1992 Olympic champion, wearing a support bandage to protect an elbow injury which has troubled her for over three years, felt her comeback was on track. "I feel like I'm in better shape than I have ever been," she said. "I played pretty good, I'm pleased with my game, I just have to keep working at it."

Samantha Smith, the new British No 1, is one of three home players awarded a wild card for next week's Texaco Ladies' Challenger Event at the Welsh National Tennis Centre in Cardiff.

For Smith, 24, it is deserved reward for a successful two weeks which has seen her reach the semi-finals of the Limoges Challenger and beat a world top 50 player, Asa Carlsson.

Now ranked 134 in the world, Smith – who only returned to the game last year after taking time away to graduate from Exeter University – will hope to push into the top 100 at Cardiff.

The other wild cards are the 17-year-old Abigail Tordoff and the former British No 1, Monique Javer. Claire Wood, the national champion, will also be competing in the event which starts on Wednesday.

Chris Wilkinson is guaranteed the circuit title after defeating Arvind Parmar, the national junior champion, 6-4 6-2 in the quarter-final of the LTA Autumn Satellite Masters in Sheffield yesterday. Wilkinson, who will now move back up to well inside the world's top 200, meets the South African Robbie Koenig, seeded fifth in today's semi-finals.

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FOOTBALL: England Under-21s miss penalty and have to settle for draw after match against Poland is delayed by bomb scare

Scimeca praised for his courage

Peter Taylor, England's Under-21 coach, blamed himself for Riccardo Scimeca's missed penalty which cost his side possible victory in their European Championship match against Poland at Molineux, which ended 0-0.

Taylor said he had not designated a replacement for the regular spot-kick taker, Bruce Dyer, who had to withdraw from the squad with a back injury. "I have to hold my hands up – I didn't nominate anybody. It was my mistake, but to be honest I was thinking more of bombs than penalties," Taylor added, after a suspect package had caused the game to be delayed for two-and-a-quarter hours.

Poland's goalkeeper, Grzegorz Szamotulski, easily saved Scimeca's 47th-minute penalty, in a throwback to the miss by his club-mate, Gareth Southgate during the penalty shoot-out against Germany in the semi-finals of *Euro 96*.

"It's incredible that another Aston Villa player has missed a penalty in an international but you've got to give credit to Riccardo. He got hold of the ball and fancied taking it," Taylor said.

The Under-21's coach said it had been a trying experience keeping his side in the right frame of mind during the security alert. "It would have been OK had the game been delayed and we knew that we had a specific time to work to – but it kept being put back," he said. "However, the lads deserve credit. They kept themselves occupied by playing wall-tennis and watching television and I still thought we would do OK.

"We started brightly but I thought we were sloppy at times. We didn't do things consistently enough and our keeper had to make a couple of good saves."

Poland's manager, Edward Lorens, said: "It was a big effort for us to get focused on the game because of the bomb scare situation. We'd also had lunch eight hours before kick-off and my players were so hungry. But I was happy with the way we played. We created some good chances and we were disappointed not to take them although I think we can still play a lot better."

Andy Marshall is hoping to make the England Under-21 goalkeeping position his own after benefiting from a taste of life at the bottom of the Second Division. Marshall, who is understood to be attracting the interest of his boyhood heroes Liverpool, has been loaned out by Norwich City to struggling Bournemouth to obtain valuable match experience.

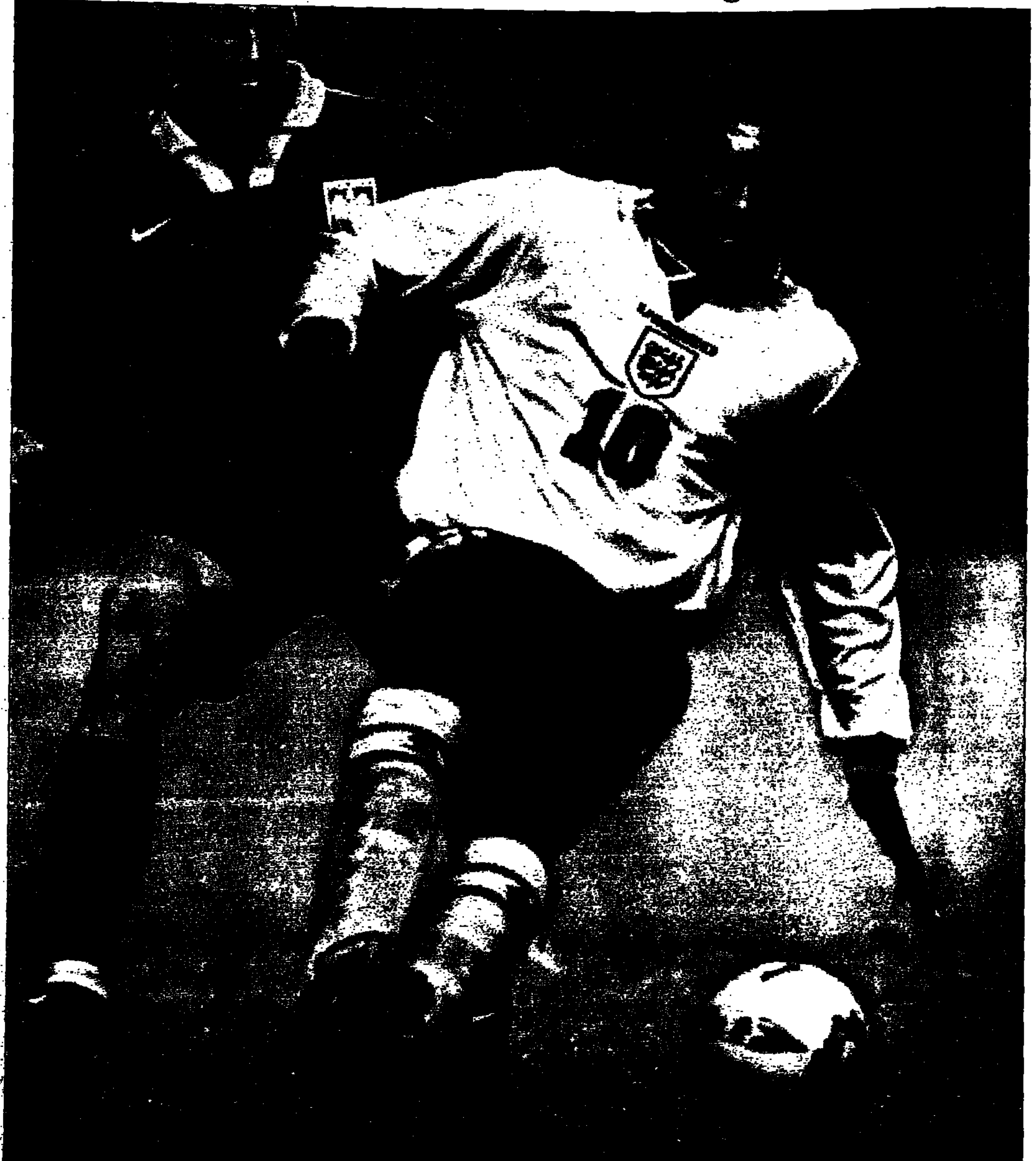
Marshall, who replaced the injured Chris Day to win his third cap, said: "I would say that was my best performance for England and I have benefited from having a spell of first-team football with Bournemouth.

"I will be hoping I have staked a claim for a regular place. Chris did very well in Moldova last month and kept a clean sheet and I've been pleased with my performance against Poland and also didn't let a goal in.

"I think the coach Peter Taylor is happy with both of us and it's up to him who he decides to pick for the next match in Georgia next month."

Marshall was keen to play down the interest apparently shown in him by Liverpool although he did admit: "I've supported them all my life and it's great to be associated with a club like that. But I don't know what if anything is going on. I've seen what's in the newspapers but that's the extent of it. If the chance came, I'd have to see what the situation was at Norwich with Bryan Gunn. Mike Walker is a great manager.

"For the present I've been asked to stay with Bournemouth for another month and I think the loan period is going to be extended."



Emile Heskey holds off Poland's Leszek Zawadzki during the goalless Under-21 match at Molineux Photograph: Laurence Griffiths/Empics

Celtic settle row with striker

ANDREW MARTIN

Pierre Van Hooijdonk's simmering row with Celtic was close to being resolved yesterday after the Parkhead club held talks with the unsettled striker.

Celtic, infuriated by Van Hooijdonk's claim for an improved pay deal, a demand the Dutchman has denied making, said the manager, Tommy Burns, had spoken to the player, "who accepts he must abide by the rules the rest of the players have to abide by".

The statement added: "Both agree the football side will take care of itself, and the player's contractual situation will be dealt with in due course."

Chris Waddle, the former England international, had his final training session at Falkirk yesterday and was looking for a new club after coming to the end of his month's spell at the Scottish First Division side.

"I am ready for anything, either as a player or on the management and coaching side. Or both," the 35-year-old Waddle said.

Cardiff City could be without a manager for the next two weeks following Phil Neal's move to become Steve Coppell's assistant at Manchester City. The Cardiff chairman, Samesh Kumar, who may seek an injunction to stop Neal joining the Maine Road club, said that it could be "a week or two" before an appointment is made.

Blackburn Rovers have insisted that their young Irish international goalkeeper, Shay Given, is not for sale.

The 20-year-old understudy to Tim Flowers is seeking an improved contract. Rovers' assistant manager, Tony Parkes, said: "The situation regarding Shay is unchanged. The club is still negotiating with the player and there is nothing more to add."

The Wolves midfielder Darren Ferguson has been banned for three games following his sending-off against Bolton Wanderers last week. His club yesterday signed the German midfielder Jens Dowe on loan until the end of the season with a view to a permanent deal.

The Aston Villa midfielder Mark Draper has been banned for one match after being dismissed for two bookable offences during last week's defeat at Newcastle United. He will miss the game at Villa Park with Leeds United on 19 October.

Southampton have been granted a work permit for the Israeli international midfielder Eyal Berkowitz, signed for £1m from Maccabi Haifa.

The Barnet chairman, Tony Kleanthous, said he is to submit plans for a new 10,000-seat multi-sport venue at Mill Hill after talks with the local council.

Kleanthous has rejected ground-sharing schemes at Enfield and Boreham Wood, but said: "We remain on course with our plans for Barnet Copthall.

"However, there are a few local issues still to resolve, particularly keeping the residents happy."

Irish youngsters show seniors the way

Ian Evans is determined to ensure his Republic of Ireland Under-21 team will maintain the winning habit after their 4-0 thrashing of Macedonia in the opening game of the European Championship qualifiers on Tuesday.

The former Welsh defender insists he will not be content to merely supply the occasional candidate for a place in Mick McCarthy's new-look senior squad.

Liverpool's reserve winger Mark Kennedy scored two late goals at Dalymount Park to underline an emphatic victory after the Wolves striker, Dominic Foley, and the Spurs full-back, Stephen Carr, had already struck to secure only the ninth Irish success in 52 matches at this level.

"I'm very satisfied with the performance – and especially the result," Evans said. "The main aim of Under-21 football has always been to push people through to the senior team, but to make it work properly you have also got to be winners in your own right.

"If you start thinking the result is not that important then everything else can get sloppy. Football is about winning matches and if you can win them with the right kind of style, so much the better."

McCarthy was at Dalymount looking for clues about how the opposition would operate in last night's full international and Evans said: "Macedonia set their stall out early on to try to just contain us and I guess it will be the same in the first-team game.

"For us it was all about trying to find ways through a tight defence and I was delighted we created so many chances."

Kennedy and Aston Villa's Gareth Farrelly, both capped at senior level, almost overwhelmed the Macedonians with their extra degree of strength and aggression.

But newcomers Foley, Glen Crowe – both brought up at Molineux – and Tottenham's Ross Darcy were also a class above their rivals and Evans paid tribute to the handling of their early development by the youth coach, Maurice Price.

"It's obvious that a great deal of good work was put in before I arrived," Evans said. "We had four or five players drop out from the original squad I selected but the boys who came in for them did extremely well.

"I can't predict how successful we will be because we just don't know the strength of future opposition in the group, but it is a real ambition to qualify for the European finals in two years' time with these lads."

Bournemouth's former Tottenham central defender Owen Coll, a genuine prospect for senior international recognition over the next few years, said: "We've begun to really feel some great team spirit having spent several days together this week.

"There hasn't been much success in the past with the Ireland Under-21 team but the boss gives us great belief in our ability to become consistent winners.

"It is a tremendous bonus if a few of us eventually get recognized as senior international material and that is what we are all looking for as individuals.

"But performing as a team and getting results like this can only be good for everybody involved."

Boost for Portugal

ROUND-UP

Portugal beat Albania 3-0 at the Qemal Stafa Stadium in Tirana yesterday in their Group Nine World Cup qualifier, a much-needed victory for the Portuguese who lost their first match to Ukraine last week.

Luis Figo scored the first goal for the Portuguese in the 11th minute after a fluent build-up, taking the Albanian goalkeeper Foto Strakosha by surprise. Figo attempted a second in the 33rd minute after a pass from João Pinto but Strakosha was ready and blocked the shot from only three yards.

The second half started out slower as sunshine gave way to rain. But in the 75th minute, Helder Cristovao scored from the right. The Albanians were in chaos, giving Rui Costa an opening to score the third goal for Portugal in the 87th minute after a headed pass from Fernando Couto.

Albania's only chance came in the 89th minute when Viktor Paco played a loose back-pass and Bledar Kola tried to intercept, but the Portuguese goalkeeper Vitor Baia was equal to the task.

The Turkish referee Oguz Sarvan booked five players: four from Portugal (Helder Cristovao, Rui Costa, João Pinto, Oceano Cruz) and one from Albania (Sokol Kushta).

SPORTING DIGEST

IAAF settles dates for drug hearings

Athletics

Antonella Bevilacqua, the Italian high jumper, and the Australian sprinter Dean Capobianco will learn within the space of a month whether they are to be banned from competition after positive drugs tests this year.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation's general secretary, Istvan Gyulai, said yesterday that dates had been set for an independent arbitration panel will meet in the federation's headquarters in Monte Carlo to discuss the Bevilacqua case on 26 October, and will consider the Capobianco case on 24 November.

The pair were allowed to compete at the Atlanta Olympics despite failing drugs tests, because the IAAF's legal advisors said the federation could be sued successfully in a civil court. Bevilacqua tested positive twice last May for the stimulant ephedrine but an Italian panel ruled she had taken the drug by accident and the statutory three-month ban was not imposed.

Capobianco tested positive for the steroid stanozolol at a meeting in Hengelo in the same month. He escaped a four-year ban when his national governing body, Athletics Australia, cleared him on the grounds that the testing procedures had been seriously flawed.

Shenton's auspicious debut

Squash

Tracey Shenton, the British junior champion, launched her full senior world tour with a breakthrough win in the second round of the Women's World Open Championship, at Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, yesterday.

The 19-year-old from Stone, Staffordshire, defeated the 30th seed, Rebecca Macree, in 70 minutes. "I had been in full training at home for the past 12 weeks preparing for this tour," Shenton said.

The teenager began to show promise 12 months ago when she qualified for the main draw of the 1995 World Open by defeating the Japanese No 1, Miyuki Adachi, in Hong Kong before extending Fiona Geaves, the England No 3, to five games in the first round proper.

Some measure of that achievement might be gained from a match yesterday in which Geaves, the 28-year-old ninth seed from Gloucester, dismissed the American No 1, Demer Holleran, in 39 minutes to reach an all-English third-round match against Sue Wright, from Kent.

The fourth seeded Cassie Jackman suffered for her win over Australia's Toni Weeks. The 23-year-old former world junior champion contrived to bounce her racket off her opponent's back and strike herself sharply across the nose.

Jackman now faces South Africa's Claire Nitch while Suzanne Horner, the third seeded British national champion, plays one young Australian, Robyn Cooper, after defeating another, Rachael Grinham.

FOOTBALL RESULTS

World Cup Group Four

Belarus (0) 1 Latvia (1) 1
Makovsky 78 Zemlinsky 18
5,000
(at Dynamo stadium, Minsk)

Estonia (0) 0 Scotland (0) 0
(at Kadriorg stadium, Tallinn)
Match abandoned due to Estonia failing to fulfil fixture; Fifa to adjudicate on 7 November.

Group Five

Israel (0) 1 Russia (0) 1
Brumer 64 Kolivanov 79
38,000
(at Ramat Gan stadium, Tel Aviv)

Group Eight

Lithuania (1) 2 Liechtenstein (0) 1
Jankauskas 43 Zech 53
Narbekovas 55 5,000
(at Zalgiris Stadium, Vilnius)

Group Nine

Albania (0) 0 Portugal (1) 3
10,000 Figo 11
Cristovao 77
Costa 89
(at Qemal Stafa stadium, Tirana)

Armenia (0) 1 Germany (3) 5
Mikaelyan 85 Hässler 20, 39
50,000 Klinsmann 26
Bobic 69
Kuntz 80
(at Razdan stadium, Yerevan)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ukraine	2	2	0	0	3	1	6
Portugal	3	1	1	1	4	2	4
Germany	1	1	0	0	5	1	3
Armenia	3	0	2	1	2	6	2
N Ireland	2	0	1	1	1	2	1

EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP Group Two (Arezzo, It): Italy 6 Georgia 0. Nine (Tirana): Portugal 4 Albania 2; (Abovian, Arm): Armenia 0 Germany 1.

Tumelty to stand in for Irish captain

Hockey

Lee Tumelty's impressive form at the World Cup men's preliminary round competition in Italy is set to earn him a place in Ireland's starting line-up for their semi-final against New Zealand tomorrow.

The Banbridge youngster has made a huge impact in his first international tournament and is likely to be brought into the midfield as the Irish captain, Alan Dowd, is struggling with a recurrence of a back injury in Wednesday's 3-1 defeat.

With the Irish having already secured a place in the next phase of the World Cup qualifying process, their Dutch coach, Cess Kopellaar, is unlikely to risk his captain.

Kopellaar, who has been singing the praises of Tumelty throughout this tournament, sees Tumelty as a successor to Jimmy Kirkwood, the Seoul goal medallist who retired last season.

Regardless of who plays, Ireland will be confident of beating New Zealand having topped their group with maximum points while averaging four goals a game. The Kiwis, in contrast, had to settle for second place in their section behind Canada on goal difference, averaging less than two goals a match.

In the other semi-final Canada play the inconsistent Poland.

Basketball

John Amaechi, the former Cleveland Cavalier now playing in Greece after returning from the NBA, is one of six overseas-based players in the England squad for this season's European Championship semi-final round group games.

ENGLAND SQUAD: J Amaechi (Panathenaikos, Gr), N Austin (London Towers), R Baker (Crystal Palace), K Brown (London Towers), S Bucknall (Iraklis, Gr), S Dinkley (Limoges, Fr), A Gardiner (Wilsevoorde, Bel), P Grainger (Manchester Giants), D Hardman (Trieste, It), R Huggins (Sheffield Sharks), I McKinney (Sheffield Sharks), M Payne (Sheffield Sharks), P Scantlebury (Thames Valley Tigers), R Scantlebury (Crystal Palace), T Simms (Newcastle Comets), J Swaine (Sheffield Sharks), I Whyte (Besançon, Fr).

Fixtures: 30 October Latvia (home, Leicester). 27 November Estonia (away). 18 December Germany (away). 28 January Portugal (home, Newcastle). 26 February Russia (home) venue to be arranged.

Cricket

Hampshire have reappointed the former Essex batsman John Stephenson as captain for next season. The 32-year-old took over from Mark Nicholas for the start of last season, but Hampshire won only three Championship matches, finishing in 14th place. Stephenson, who picked up an England cap in 1989, had his own season ruined by injury, managing to score just 611 runs and taking 38 first-class wickets.

Cycling

WORLD ROAD-RACE CHAMPIONSHIPS (Lugano, Swit): Men's under-23 individual time trial: 1 L Sironi (It) 37min 51.89sec; 2 R Sgambelluri (It) 38:44.38; 3 A Kloeden (Ger) 38:49.39; 4 N O'Neill (Aus) 39:32.58; 5 M Gono (Aus) 39:59.86; 6 B Nitchipourenko (Rus) 40:09.84; 7 V Hugo Pena Grisales (Col) 40:17.27; 8 J Peeters (Neth) 40:27.02; 9 J Jaksche (Ger) 40:27.14; 10 P Manning (GB) 40:31.42; 11 L Bodrogi (Hun) 40:43.53; 12 A Langella (Fr) 40:44.60; 13 O Kymenko (Ukr) 40:46.58; 14 M Ljungqvist (Swe) 40:47.75; 15 A Hauptmann (Sloven) 40:54.82; 16 Z Conrad (US) 40:56.12; 17 M Nielsen (Den) 40:57.85; 18 T Jones (Zim) 40:58.43; 19 A Aeschbach (Swit) 41:15.99; 20 A Gonzalez (Sp) 41:20.44. **Women's individual time trial (18.4 miles):** 1 J Longo-Ciprelli (Fr) 35min 16.07sec; 2 C Marsal (Fr) 36:05.00; 3 A Cappellotto (It) 36:10.47; 4 Z Zabirova (Rus) 36:31.44; 5 C Hughes (Can) 36:41.81; 6 M Clignet (Fr) 36:45.24; 18 Y McGregor (GB) 38:01.09.

Football

Schalke, the German First Division side, yesterday appointed the former Dutch international defender Huub Stevens as their new coach after Joerg Berger was sacked last week following a players' revolt.

The Northern Ireland international Aidan Davison has joined Ipswich Town on a month's loan from Bolton.

Leicester City have taken Stuart Slater on trial. The former West Ham and Celtic winger has had injury problems leading to his release by First Division Ipswich Town.

TUESDAY'S LATE RESULTS: World Cup Group One: Bosnia 1 Croatia 4. **Group Five:** Luxembourg 1 Bulgaria 2. **European Under-21 Championship: Group Two:** England 0 Poland 0. **Group Four:** Estonia 0 Scotland 1. **Group Eight:** Rep of Ireland 4 Macedonia 0. **Other ties: Group One (Jesolo):** Bosnia 3 Croatia 1. **Group Four (Gavle, Swe):** Sweden 4 Austria 1. **Group Five (Herzliya):** Israel 1 Russia 0. **Group Seven (San Marino):** San Marino 1 Belgium 5. **Nationwide Football League First Division:** Huddersfield 3 Birmingham 0. **Second Division:** Peterborough 1 Notts County 3; Wrexham 2 Shrewsbury 1. **GM Vauxhall Conference Spalding Challenge Cup first round first leg:** Bath 0 Welling 2; Dover 2 Rushden 3; Halifax 0 Altrincham 1 (aet); Kettering 1 Slough 0; Stalybridge 3 Telford 1 (aet). **Scottish League Challenge Cup semi-final:** St Johnstone 4 Montrose 2. **Unibond League Premier Division:** Bamber Bridge 1 Barrow 3; Chorley 4 Runcorn 0; Gainsborough 0 Emley 3; Lancaster 1 Blyth Spartans 0; Leek Town 1 Buxton 1. **First Division:** Atherton 0 Great Harwood 1; Curzon Ashton 3 Droylsden 3; Flixton 0 Leigh 1; Lincoln 2 Eastwood 1; Matlock 2 Congleton 0; Netherfield 0 Gretna 1; Stocksbridge 2 Worksop 1; Warrington 0 Ashton United 4; Workington 1 Radcliffe 1. **Icis League Premier Division:** Staines 0 Chertsey 0. **First Division:** Abingdon Town 0 Walton 0; Marlow 0 Leyton Pennant 1; Wokingham 1 Molesey 2. **Dr Martens Cup first round first leg:** Ashford 3 Tonbridge 2; Atherstone Utd 0 V S Rugby 2; Buckingham Town 0 Cambridge 3; Chelmsford 0 Baldock 1; Cirencester 3 Forest Green Rovers 3; Erith & Belvedere 1 Margate 2; Gloucester 5 Cinderford Town 0; Gravesend & Northfleet 2 Sittingbourne 3; Halesowen Town 1 Stafford 0; Hastings 1 St Leonards 2; Hinckley Town 1 Nuneaton 2; Ilkeston 1 Gresley Rovers 1; Newport 3 Havant 2; Redditch 1 Bilston 1; Shepshed Dynamo 2 Racing Club Warwick 2; Stourbridge 1 Worcester 1; Sudbury Town 2 Fisher Athletic London 1; Sutton Coldfield 2 Moor Green 2; Waterlooville 0 Fleet 1; Weston-super-Mare 0 Trowbridge 2; Weymouth 4 Fareham 1; Witney 1 Clevedon 1; Yate 2 Merthyr Tydfil 2. **Postponed:** Tamworth v Bedworth Utd. **Wilkinson's Sword League Cup Semi-final:** Crusaders 1 Linfield 1 (Crusaders win 4-1 on pens). **Jewson Eastern League Premier Division:** Wetton 2 Hadleigh 1; Woodbridge 0 Sudbury Wanderers 1; Diss Town 3 Gorleston 1. **Northern Counties East League Premier Division:** Glasshoughton 1 Ossett Albion 0; Liversedge 3 Armthorpe 0; Thackley 2 Hallam 1; Ossett Town 1 Pontefract 0; North Ferriby 3 Pickering 0. **Federation Brewery Northern League First Division:** Chester-le-Street 1 Whickham 2. **Winstonlead Kent League First Division:** Tunbridge Wells 3 Canterbury City 0. **League of Wales:** Bangor 3 Rhyl 0; Barry Town 6 Carmarthen 0; Caersws 0 Ebbw Vale 5; Flint 0 Connah's Quay 2; Llansantffraid 3 Aberystwyth 2. **Pontins League Premier Division:** Oldham 1 Nottm Forest 1; Sheff Wed 3 Leeds 3. **First Division:** Sheff Utd 2 Port Vale 1. **Second Division:** Man City 0 Grimsby 2; Rotherham 1 Stockport 2. **Third Division:** Chesterfield 0 Darlington 2; Walsall 1 Scarborough 1. **Avon Insurance Combination First Division:** Millwall 0 Ipswich 4. **Friendly:** Sutton Utd 0 West Ham 4. **Dutch League:** PSV Eindhoven 2 Twente Enschede 0; Fortuna Sittard 0 Graafschap Doetinchem 3.

Golf

PING LEADERBOARD (Women's world rankings): 1 L Davies (Eng) 433.27pts; 2 A Sorenstam (Swe) 351.17; 3 K Webb (Aus) 278.82; 4 D Pepper (US) 269.24; 5 L Neumann (Swe) 266.18; 6 M McGann (US) 212.71; 7 M Mallon (US) 211.67; 8 K Robbins (US) 209.08; 9 J Geddes (US) 150.26; 10 H Alfredsson (Swe) 148.50; 11 V Skinner (US) 145.52; 12 A Nicholas (Eng) 142.83.

Ice Hockey

NHL: Hartford 7 Pittsburgh 3; Florida 1 NY Rangers 1 (ot); Toronto 2 Edmonton 4; Dallas 5 Washington 3; Colorado 6 San Jose 0

Lacrosse

THE LEN SMITH SOUTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE: Putney 6 Motspur 5; Berkshire Wanderers 6 Centaurs 5; Pendley 5 Harpenden 1.

Pools News

LITTLEWOODS: Dividends for matches played 5 Oct: Treble chance: 21pts: £28,985.65. **20:** £113.50. **19:** £8.40. **18:** £1.90. **Four draws:** £18.50. **10 homes:** £1,256.30. **Five aways:** £264.65.

ZETTERS: Treble chance: 21pts: £1,825.65, 20 £6.80, 19 £0.70 (three dividends only). **Four draws:** £20.00. **Eight homes:** £87.40. **Four aways:** £91.00. **Lucky numbers:** 1 2 7 21 28 33.

VERNONS: Treble chance: 21pts: £10,058.00. **20:** £49.25. **19:** £7.50. **Super shots:** £100.00. **Premier 10:** £515.00.

Rugby League

St Helens, the Super League champions, have received a work permit clearance for 23-year-old prop Julian O'Neill, their new signing from New Zealand's Auckland Warriors.

Rugby Union

Jon Sleightholme, the England wing, has been dropped by Bath for the European Cup match against Edinburgh on Saturday. Sleightholme, makes way for Jason Robinson, the club's new signing from the Wigan rugby league team.

North Berwick have had two points deducted after failing to turn up for a match in the National League at Highland last month. The Fourth Division club have also been put on probation by the Scottish Rugby Union's championship committee for the rest of the season.

Snooker

ROTHMANS MALTA GRAND PRIX First round: A Robidoux (Can) bt S Camilleri (Mal) 5-3.

Squash

QATAR INTERNATIONAL (Doha) Semi-final: J Khan (Pak) bt J Bonetat (Fr) 15-8 15-11 15-8.

WOMEN'S WORLD OPEN (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia) Second round: M Martin (Aus) bt S Baum (Ger) 9-1 9-3 9-4; T Shenton (Eng) bt R Macree (Eng) 9-4 9-7 8-10 6-9 9-6; C Jackman (Eng) bt T Weeks (Aus) 9-0 9-5 3-9 9-5; C Nitch (SA) bt S Shabana (Egypt) 9-3 9-5 3-9 9-3; F Geaves (Eng) bt D Holleran (US) 4-9 9-3 9-4 9-4; S Wright (Eng) bt J Wilson (NZ) 2-9 9-5 9-1 9-0; R Cooper (Aus) bt E Pierce (US) 9-1 9-0 9-0; C Owens (Aus) bt S Bartel (Ger) 9-3 9-3 9-5; P Beams (NZ) bt N Tippett (Aus) 9-2 9-3 9-0; S Fitz-Gerald (Aus) bt C Venter (SA) 9-1 9-1 9-0; L Irving (Aus) bt N Tippet (Aus) 9-5 9-2 9-3; M Bell (Aus) bt V Cardwell (Aus) 4-9 9-0 9-0 9-1 9-2; S Schone (Ger) bt S Cook (NZ) 7-9 9-5 9-3 9-3; L Marsh (NZ) bt V Atkinson (Neth) 9-1 9-7 9-2; S Horner (Eng) bt R Grinham (Aus) 4-9 9-6 9-2 9-1; L Charman (Eng) bt D Brady-Harre (Aus) 5-9 9-0 9-1 9-0.

Tennis

CA TROPHY (Vienna) Men's singles, first round: A Boetsch (Fr) bt M Rios (Chile) 6-2 6-4; Y Kafelnikov (Rus) bt D Prinosil (Ger) 7-6 6-2.

PORSCHE GRAND PRIX (Filderstadt): Women's singles, first round: A Huber (Ger) bt E Wagner (Ger) 6-2 6-1. **Second round:** A Sanchez Vicario (Sp) bt J Capriati (US) 6-4 6-4.

LTA AUTUMN SATELLITE MASTERS (Sheffield) Men's singles, quarter-finals: R Koenig (SA) bt N Weal (GB) 3-6 6-4 6-3; C Beecher (GB) bt F Rovas (Swe) 6-3 6-4; C Wilkinson (GB) bt A Parmar (GB) 6-4 6-2; O Fukarek (Cz Rep) bt P Robinson (GB) 7-6 6-2.

TODAY'S NUMBER

38

The number of years that have passed until Manchester United have been able to return the favour of Bishop Auckland, who donated several players after the 1958 Munich disaster. United last night played a benefit at Kingsway to help the non-League club, who are in financial trouble after a legal action.

'I hope he goes out and wins it and doesn't just let it come to him'
Derick Allsop on Damon Hill's prospects at the Japanese Grand Prix Page 30

WORLD CUP FOOTBALL: Estonia face sanctions for failing to turn up at revised kick-off time after dispute over floodlighting

A most one-sided affair: Scotland begin and end their World Cup qualifying 'match' against Estonia yesterday with a single kick from Billy Dodds to John Collins

Photographs: Matthew Ashton/Empics

Scotland await verdict after farce

PHIL SHAW
reports from Tallinn

It was a scenario with which every Sunday morning player will be familiar; one team turns up, the other does not. The difference here in the Kadriorg Stadium yesterday was that this was a World Cup qualifying match, not a park kickabout, and Estonia's extraordinary refusal to fulfil the fixture left Scotland all dressed up with no one to play.

In order to satisfy their obligations to Fifa, the game's world governing body, the Scotland team duly marched on, in full kit, three minutes before the rearranged kick-off time of 3pm local time. With the Estonian half of the pitch empty, the Scots lined up in formation. Billy Dodds rolled the ball forward from the centre spot to John Collins, captaining his country for the first time. The referee immediately blew his whistle and led the Scotland team off.

With the exception of the national anthems, all the formalities had been observed. Collins shook hands with the Yugoslav referee, Miroslav Radoman, while the linesmen checked there were no holes in the goal nets. No sooner had the thousand or so Scotland supporters launched into an ironic chorus of "get in tae them" than Radoman ended the farce.

Ended it, that is, as far as Scotland were concerned. As they prepared to leave for the airport, the floodlights at the centre of the controversy flickered into life. The electronic scoreboard was still stubbornly showing the kick-off as 6.45, and the Estonian military began assuming their positions.

Scotland's fans, who had made a 2,000-mile round trip for the games with Latvia last Saturday and Estonia, took the abandonment in good humour. They sang: "There's only one team in Tallinn" as they dispersed, though the biggest cheer came when a kilted fan charged on with a ball and dribbled it into the goal.

Even now this bizarre episode may not be over. The initial indications from Fifa's match delegate, Jean-Marie Gantenbein of Luxembourg, were that Scotland would be awarded the match. Later however, Fifa said that no decision had been made and that reports from the referee and Gantenbein, as well as a protest from the Estonian authorities, would be considered by the World Cup organising committee. A decision will be made at the committee's meeting on 7 November.

A Fifa statement pointed out that its regulations state when a team does not report for a match the opponents will be awarded a 3-0 victory and the three points, "except in cases of *force majeure* recognised by the organising committee".

Keith Cooper, a Fifa spokesman, said: "Other options are at the discretion of the committee if a team can't make it to a match because of circumstances beyond their control, but there are no precedents for this.

"The Estonian FA have indicated to us that they had a logistical problem which prevented them getting to the stadium on time for the revised kick-off and that could be taken into account if it can be proved to be true."

Estonia, meanwhile, may face severe penalties, possibly even expulsion, by Fifa. They will undoubtedly ask why Fifa's stadium committee, which is chaired by the former Scottish Football Association secretary Ernie Walker, passed the Kadriorg stadium in the first instance.

The saga of the game that never was had begun innocuously enough 24 hours earlier when Gantenbein, the Fifa delegate for the Group Four fixture, raised doubts about the standard of the temporary floodlighting hired from Finland. Craig Brown, the Scotland manager, asked to see them on "full beam" after Tuesday's Under-21 match and was unhappy with what he saw.

As a result, the Scottish FA faxed a complaint late on Tuesday night to Fifa's headquarters in Zurich. Copies were also placed under the doors of Messrs Gantenbein and Radoman. Brown said that his team would play at the appointed hour – 6.45pm – but only under duress.

Fifa's emergency committee convened at 2.30am yesterday and upheld Scotland's protest. The delegate informed both national associations that the game would now start three-and three-quarter hours earlier, in daylight, and that seemed to be the end of the matter.

The Estonian FA, however, refused to accept the ruling. High among their considerations was the fact that BBC Television had agreed to pay them £50,000 for the right to screen the match live in Scotland. With the Dunblane Memorial Service already scheduled for coverage at the new kick-off time, there was no question of the BBC showing the game live. That would have meant the Estonians having to accept a drastically reduced fee.

Even as late as 2.30pm, with his squad out on the pitch warming up, Brown was convinced that Estonia would turn up to play. But a vice-president of their FA, Aivar Pohlak, insisted that their Icelandic coach, Teitur Thordarson, was sticking to his original plans. The players were having lunch 65 miles away, he said, and would be turning up for a 6.45 start.

That way the Estonians would incur only nominal fines for not being at the ground two hours ahead of kick-off and for handing in their team-sheet late. But they were not bluffing, and Pohlak went on to accuse the Scots of being unsporting. "It was made clear this morning that we couldn't come before the original agreed time," he said. "When we got the instruction we told Fifa we *couldn't change*. We believe the Scottish FA has been very unfair to us."

Mart Tarmak, another vice-president of the Estonian FA, said later that his country would be prepared to play Scotland twice in Britain rather than concede the points. He said: "We would prefer if Scotland would come back here for a rematch because our supporters deserve to see the match which they have paid for. If not, we will be prepared to play in Scotland twice." Estonia are due in Scotland next March.

Jim Farry, the SFA's chief executive, expressed sympathy for Estonia's predicament, admitting he would be less than pleased if a game at Hampden Park were suddenly switched to midday. But he added: "Fifa's committee reflected overnight and consulted the delegate this morning. It was his firm view that the conditions did not meet the minimum requirements.

"We received a fax at 10am informing us that the match was to kick off at 3pm. And that was their final decision. Our argument was not based purely on *the power of the lights*. It was on the sporting principle that our goalkeeper couldn't see the ball coming in from the left side of the pitch, which of course affects both teams."

Asked whether the issue of television rights was "the bottom line", Farry replied: "Finance was mentioned."

Thordarson, the Estonia manager, said he felt there was "something dirty" about the whole affair and added: "I feel terrible. It was too late for us to change the time when we were told."

One reason why Scotland are keen that the match should not be replayed is that Gary McAllister was suspended for this fixture but will be available for Scotland's match next month against Sweden.

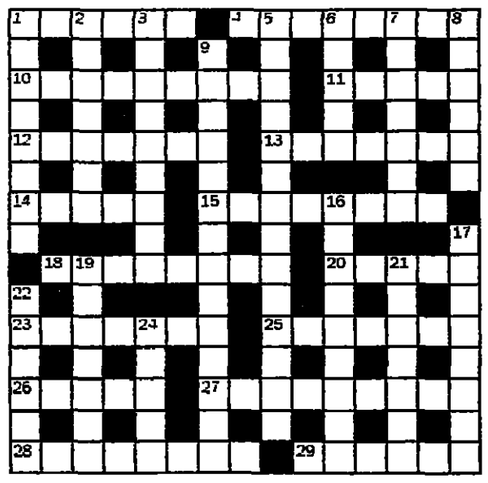
Yesterday's remarkable events had echoes of 1973, *when Russia refused to play* Chile in Santiago in a World Cup play-off match as a protest against the recently established Pinochet regime. The Chileans kicked off and walked the ball into the net before the referee called a halt.

SCOTLAND (team that took field to play Estonia, World Cup qualifying Group Four): Gorry; McNamara, Boyd, Calderwood, T McKinlay, Lambert, Collins, Burley, Dodds, Jackson, J McGinlay. Substitutes: Leighton, White, McAllister, Gemmill, B McKinlay, McCall, Freedman.

Referee: Miroslav Radoman (Yugoslavia).

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3114. Thursday 10 October — By Spurius



ACROSS

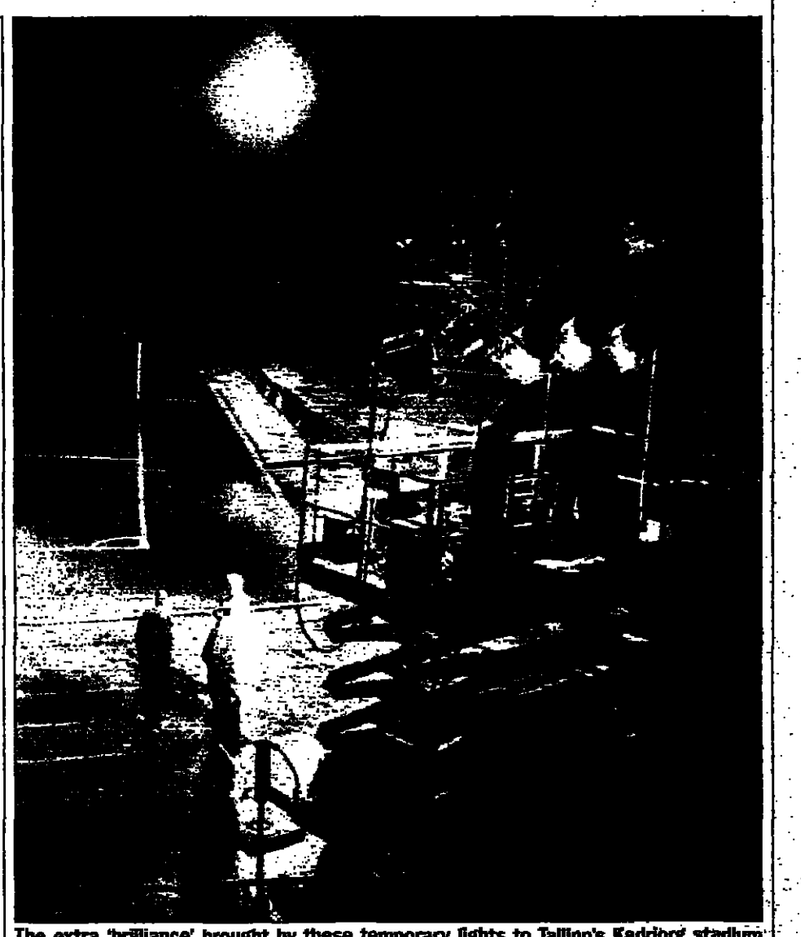
1 Legendary US agent holding a law degree (6)
4 Old boy's story about contralto's impediment (8)
10 Open University study period seen by East German as extremely remote (9)
11 Courage shown by monarch, see, going through northern Spain (5)
12 Bishop accepts blame for digging up climbing plant (7)
13 Old piece about Hawaii featured in show (7)
14 Sight possibly seen on common sometimes? (5)
15 Information American provided about a doctor is shocking (8)
18 Military HQ in Pennsylvania divided about army move (8)
20 Attractive female youth leader seen with legislator in New Hampshire (5)
23 Account about one carried back needing oxygen? (7)
25 Ensure compliance with measure favouring established church (7)
26 Happen to drop into our cricket club (5)
27 Attitude of deference from Bacon I see as misplaced (9)
28 Form of tenure here that's been amended in pen (8)
29 Light brown motor yacht crossing river (6)

Wednesday's solution

PLATTER MATISSE
ELEMENT COMMAND
MOISTNESS LOUSE
TWANG DRUMBEATS
EPIDERMIS GRASP
ELGIN FRIGHTFUL
ARIZONA LINCOLN
LEGUMES DAYSTAR

DOWN

1 Sole means of support? (8)
2 Striker separated from his comrade by a chain (7)
3 Part played mostly by people in hospital department recording names (9)
5 Unlikely to be catching? (6-8)
6 Smell when head's cut off fish (5)
7 Most unfashionable for West Indian to ride on reindeer (7)
8 Steven runs in races (6)
9 Where they teach you how to get on? (8, 6)
16 Inmost fear endlessly churned up by list of promises (9)
17 Hear husband one night gets caught in dishonest behaviour (8)
19 Painkillers relieve it to some extent, being near a chemist (7)
21 Training seminar for troops (7)
22 Give P45s? End of story (6)
24 Man lying on hospital bed (5)



The extra 'brilliance' brought by these temporary lights to Tallinn's Kadriorg stadium was not enough to persuade Fifa that the game should kick-off at 6.45 as scheduled

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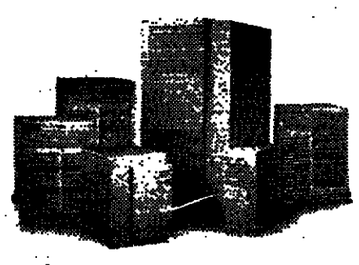
MORSE

One Big Happy Family.



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